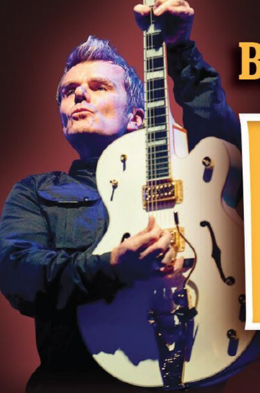

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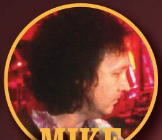

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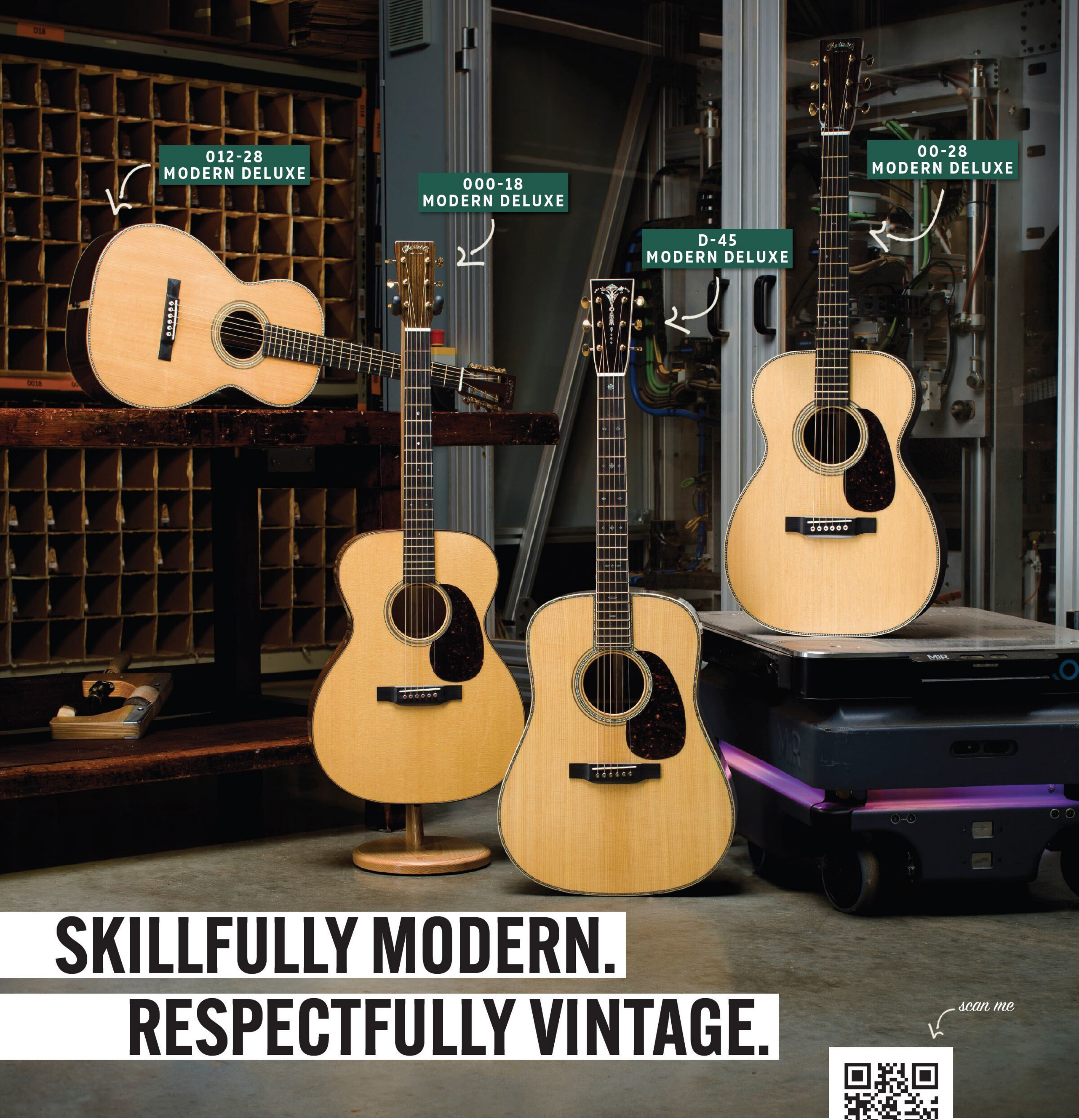
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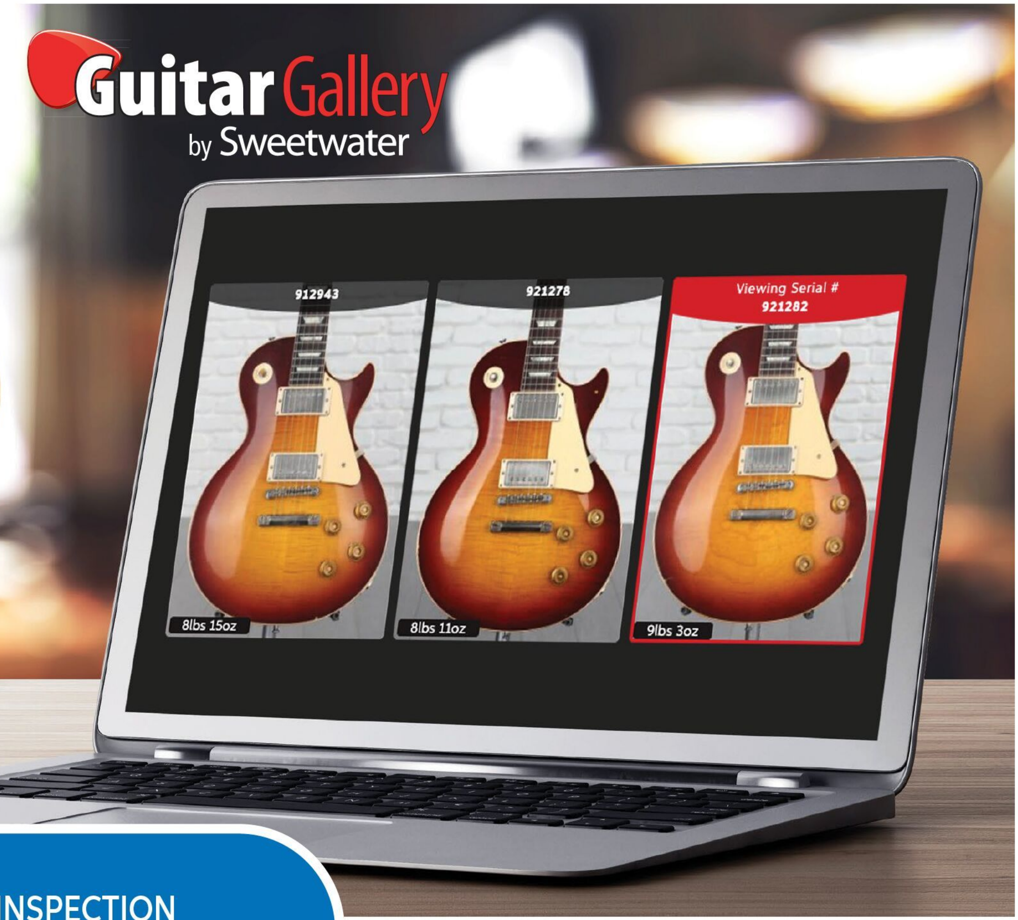

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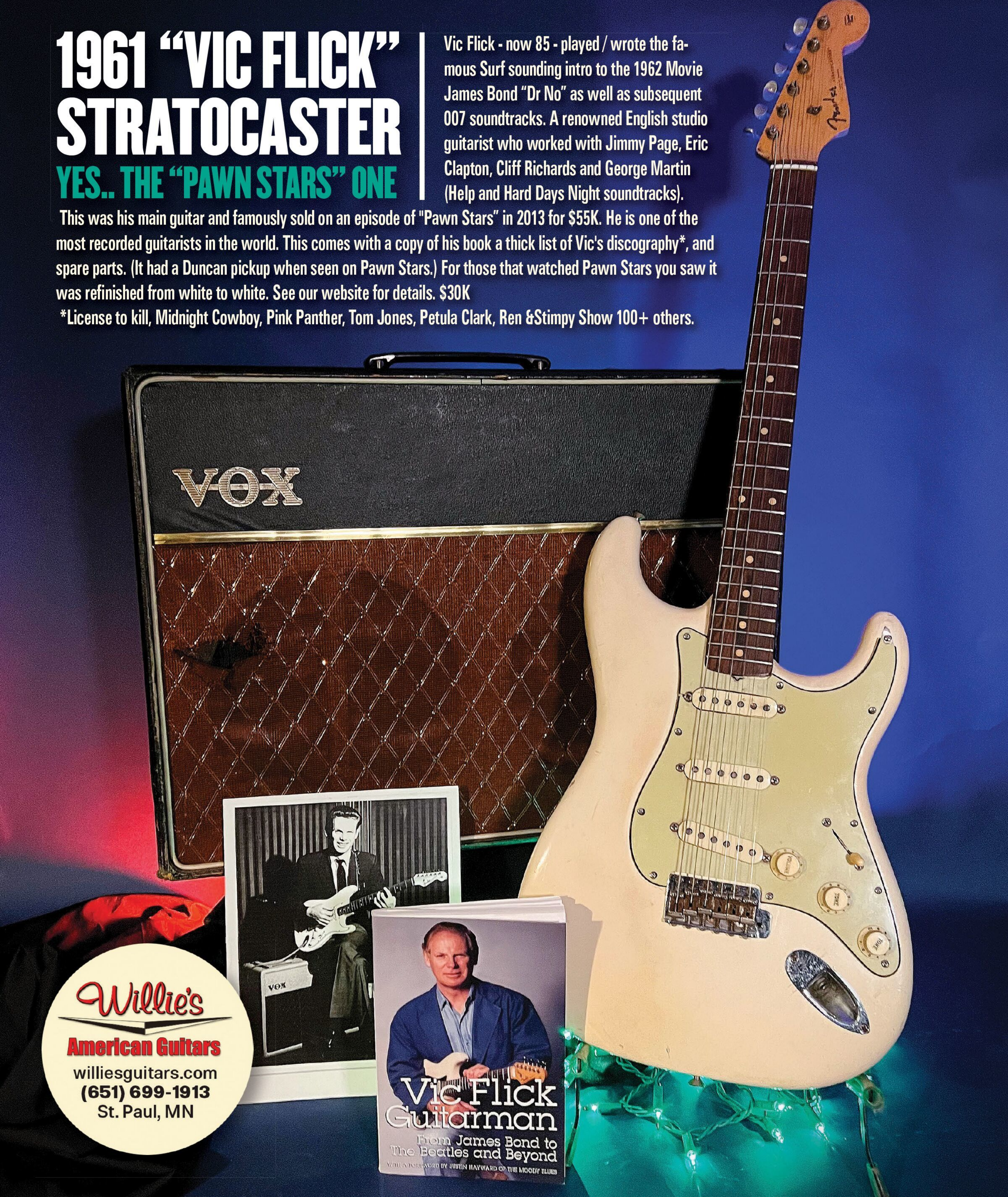
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Joe Robinson

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WHAT'S (NOT) IN A NAME

The Fender AA964 Princeton

Languishing in the shadow of one of the greatest all-round amps, the humble sibling of the Princeton Reverb presents charms all its own. In some situations, it's a *better* choice.

| *By Dave Hunter*

58

ALL THAT GLITTERS

Gibson's Copper Iridescent Les Pauls

Like large celestial bodies, some guitar collectors have a gravity that draws objects their way. In 2016, rare custom-color Les Pauls began entering Joe Bonamassa's orbit.

| *By Ward Meeker*

66

MIKE CAMPBELL

Fillmore Flashback

In early '97, Tom Petty was unsure what the future held for him or the Heartbreakers. But he was searching for something new. The elixer proved to be a 20-show residency at a venue he had never entered.

| *By Sean McDevitt*

TOM PETTY AND THE HEART BREAKERS FILLMORE

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READER MAIL

RECALLING RAY

I met Ray Edenton ("First Fret," December '22) during a recording session at RCA Studio A in 1958. He brought an archtop guitar and asked if he could use my Gibson J-45 to get a different sound.

Ray played on hundreds of hits; if you listen to the intro of the original "Oh Lonesome Me" by Don Gibson, you're hearing Ray Edenton

Arthur Osborne
Hampton, Florida

THE GREAT CRAYTON

Thanks to Wolf Marshall for the interesting "Fretprints" on Pee Wee Crayton (November '22). Wolf's research was thorough and I learned many interesting details.

In the '90s, I bought a Crayton CD produced by Rod Piazza and digested a huge amount of blues guitar from it. Wolf's tablature did a nice job capturing Crayton's sound. He was a big influence on blues guitarists and it's great when younger fans get a glimpse of a true innovator and originator.

Please keep up the good work of featuring blues greats.

Jerry Rosen
Los Angeles, California

MISSING PHIL

I was very honored that Dan Forte wrote such kind words about my dad, Phil Chen ("First Fret," March '22). I miss him so much and as we are approaching one year since he passed, reading it [at www.vintageguitar.com] meant so much to me. I would like to thank Dan for this incredibly special piece.

Lindsey (Chen) Mattioli
San Marcos, California

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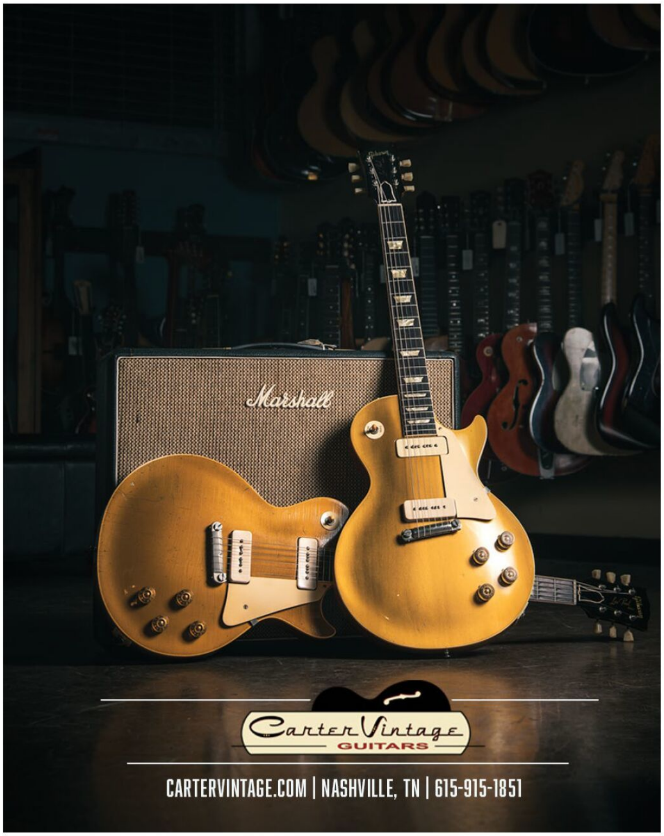

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FIRST FRET

JIM McCARTY

Detroit Rock Royalty

Playing Detroit in 2013, Joe Bonamassa had a special treat in store for the crowd. "The best, most badass guitar legend that ever came out of this town," he declared. "He's the pride of Detroit. I give you the legend that is Jim McCarty."

Although he has largely flown under the guitar-hero radar, the lanky McCarty (not to be confused with the Yardbirds drummer of the same name) is the definition of a journeyman picker. From his tenure with Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels onto Buddy Miles, Cactus, the Rockets, and leading the band Mystery Train, he has more than held his own with the best blues men and hard-rockers.

"I played drums for 15 years before I ever picked up a guitar," he recounts. "My dad was a drummer back in the big-band days. I started teaching myself guitar when I was about 15."

Circa 1963, McCarty, drummer Johnny Bee (Badanjek), and bassist Earl Elliott became the house band at The Village, backing various black acts. "One night this white guy sat in, Billy Levise, and there was an immediate chemistry. We got together and he brought Joe Kubert in to play rhythm guitar, and that was the birth of Billy Lee & the Rivieras."

Jim McCarty: J.C. Whitelaw/Wikimedia.

PEAVEY DONATES GUITARS

Peavey Electronics recently donated 26 Delta Woods guitars to organizations that provide music therapy to disabled veterans, children, and adults with special needs. Selectron Solutions, Peavey's partner in product returns, collected suitable instruments and helped identify organizations in need. To date, they have sent guitars to Mosaic Music Therapy and Jammin' Jenn Music Therapy, both based in New Jersey.

VOROS, ACOUSTIC COFFEE HELP MS RESEARCH

Greg Voros, who leads the restoration team at Gruhn Guitars, is teaming with Acoustic Coffee Company to create the Legends Blend, sales of which will generate proceeds for the Multiple Sclerosis Center at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

Acoustic Coffee is donating $1 for every bag sold online to the center at VU, where it will advance research and help MS patients get access to therapy; Voros was diagnosed with MS in the summer of 2020. To learn more, visit www.acoustic.coffee or find Acoustic Coffee Company on social media.

ANY QUESTIONS?

This month marks the debut of "*VG* Q&A," a column that will address questions about guitar-related subjects ranging from songs, albums, and musicians to the minutiae of instrument builds, manufacturers, and the collectible market. If there's something you'd like to know and think our expert *VG* staff can address, send a question to ward@vintageguitar.com with "VG Q&A" in the subject line.

Producer Bob Crewe changed the name to Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels. Of his choice of guitar, the 77-year-old laughs, "I saw this band called the Beatles, and George Harrison had a Gretsch Country Gentleman. I saw all those switches and said, 'Man, I gotta get me one of those.' That was the guitar on 'Jenny Take a Ride.' I played it through a Vox Super Beatle. Then I switched to a Gibson Byrdland jazz guitar for the rest of the Mitch Ryder stuff."

That "stuff" consisted of a three-album run that included "Devil With The Blue Dress On" and "Sock It To Me, Baby" – a higher-energy version of blue-eyed soul than the Righteous Brothers or Young Rascals.

"I've always been into the blues," McCarty says of his influences. "That *Paul Butterfield Blues Band* album was something, boy. Michael Bloomfield was a tremendous guitar player. Charlie Musselwhite's first album, *Stand Back!*, also killed me. What a tone Harvey Mandel had on that album. And Peter Green? Who isn't a fan? He was probably the deepest English blues guy."

Contrary to some accounts, Mike Bloomfield did not play on any Detroit Wheels records. McCarty confirms, "Every lead guitar part was me."

In '68, he joined Buddy Miles, his goldtop with humbuckers featured on two albums.

"There were a lot of great guitar players back then," he points out. "You had Beck, Clapton, Jimmy Page, Michael Bloomfield; they were all good guitar players. And then there was Jimi Hendrix, who took the electric guitar and made it an electronic instrument, and did it with soul. It's similar to what Louis Armstrong did in the '20s with the Hot Five and improvisational music, or John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, or Miles Davis. They were not only great at what they did, they changed the parameters of what the rest of us were doing. They changed the landscape."

Of his "Jimi/Jimmy Jam" appearance on the posthumous *Nine To The Universe*, McCarty says, "It was people trying to make a buck off this dead guy. The year or so I was with Buddy, Jimi was coming around, and we'd go to the Record Plant and play until the sun came up. But that stuff was never intended to be released, and should not have been."

Next came the hard-rock Cactus in 1969 (see this month's "Check This Action" for more on that period), with McCarty splitting in '72, forming the Rockets with Badanjek. "I wanted to get back to a Rolling Stones kind of thing. I left the Rockets after 10 years because I wanted to play blues. I went back into the bars in Detroit. Now, being a good rock guitarist doesn't mean you can play blues. After years of playing in the bars, I learned to understand what playing blues is."

That understanding is evident in two live volumes of *Jim McCarty & Friends*, where he's joined by Duke Robillard, Coco Montoya, Tommy Castro, Joe Louis Walker, Johnny A, and Jimmy Thackery,

For the past 25 years, he has played with the Detroit Blues Band and Mystery Train with son Dylan on drums. Main axes are a black '94 Les Paul Standard and a '95 Custom through a Pro Reverb, Tube Screamer, and Tube Works Tube Driver. "A Les Paul into a vintage Fender amp, and I'm home," he nods.

The 2018 album *Talking To Myself* is an excellent collection of original instrumentals with him playing guitar, drums, and bass, and the *Acoustic Ideas* departure is McCarty alone with his Gibson Dove.

These days, he stays within about 100 miles of Detroit.

"I have trouble sleeping when I'm on the road," he explains. "So I'm tired onstage, and that's nor fair to me or the audience. But I'm healthy, still playing my ass off." ***– Dan Forte***

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JOE ROBINSON

Eyes on the Prize

Bouncing on a trampoline in the yard of the home his father built outside Temagog, Australia, nine-year-old Joe Robinson gleefully started playing air guitar while Eric Clapton's "Layla" was blasting from his parents' stereo inside. At that moment, he decided it would be "really cool" to be a professional guitar player.

A year and half later, he was touring with Phil Emmanuel, and at 17 he won the "Australia's Got Talent" finale, playing Mason Williams' "Classical Gas."

Robinson's latest album is *The Prize*, 10 original songs co-written with Grammy-winning producer, engineer, and songwriter Brent Maher, who discovered The Judds and has worked with The Supremes, Roy Orbison, Chuck Berry, Duke Ellington, and has more than 20 #1 singles to his credit. Early in his career, Maher was mentored by the husband-and-wife songwriting team of Felice and Boudleaux Bryant, who wrote the Everly Brothers "Bye Bye Love" and "Wake Up Little Susie" and whose compositions have been recorded by everyone from Tony Bennett to The Grateful Dead.

"Brent is a very deep well of musical experience," says Robinson. "He would direct the songs in a way that was exactly what they needed."

Robinson met Maher at a tribute show for the late slide player Mark Selby. Maher was impressed with how Robinson played all the guitar parts that night, and in 2019 they started writing for what would become *The Prize*.

Two seasoned Nashville session players were called in for the recordings – bassist Glenn Worf, who tours with Mark Knopfler, and drummer Nir Zidkyahu, who appeared on Genesis' *Calling All Stations* and John Mayer's *Room for Squares*. The recordings were done at Maher's studio, The Blue Room, in Berry Hill, just outside of Nashville.

"They have songwriting rooms in the publishing part of the building," said Robinson. "We would sit with two guitars and I'd have a riff and a title and he'd have a few title ideas. We would write for two or three days, come up with two or three songs, then call Glenn and Nir and arrange a recording date, often the following week."

The sessions were engineered by Maher and Charles Yingling, and recorded on a vintage Trident console.

"We all recorded live and I played and sang at the same time," said Robinson. "We brought in R&B singer Wendy Moten as a background vocalist and added strings and horns on certain songs, but the core group was always playing live.

"Part of the reason for not going into the studio and recording 10 songs at once was I was on the road a lot and I was paying for the whole thing, so it depended on when I had the cash. I like to pay the musicians more than union scale because I'm a musician myself and I like to work with the best people I can. If you go in and do it right the first time, it saves having to go in and fix things."

The title song of the album had a simple beginning; Robinson had the phrase, "I've got my eyes on the prize" in mind and Maher suggested "The Prize" could be an intriguing song title and followed that up with the opening line, "I had a one-way conversation with me, myself, and I." Given Robinson's philosophy that songs should be straightforward, it worked.

"If you listen to a lot of the great classic songs, often times they repeat the first verse and the chorus is very simple," he said. "Brent would say, 'Okay, we've got a couple of verses and a chorus, and the first verse is strong – it's a hook in itself, so let's repeat it,' and the song would be done."

For this album, Robinson used his signature Maton JR on the acoustic songs. On "So Much More," it's his Fender Custom Shop '63 Strat into Maher's mid-'60s Deluxe Reverb, and on "Moonlight and Magic" Robinson brought out his '89 Ibanez George Benson GB-10 and ran it through the Deluxe. – ***Bob Dragich***

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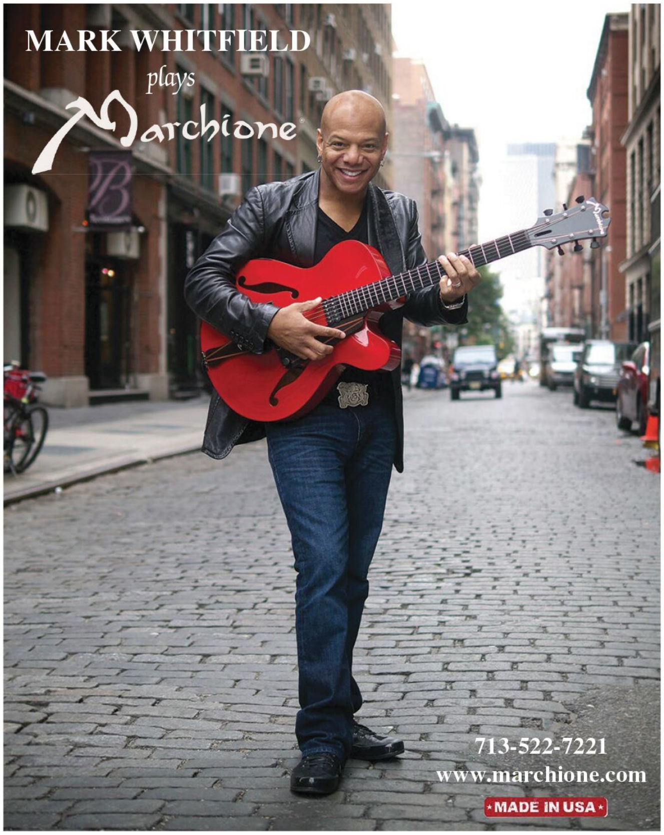
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VINNIE MOORE

Perpetually Exceptional

Shred architect Vinnie Moore's latest solo record, *Double Exposure*, holds the distinction of being both an instrumental solo album and a vocal-rock record. The glue that holds it together is Moore's exceptional guitar playing, as he puts his neoclassical excursions aside to unleash the pentatonic fury heard at his day job with UFO. But there's more, as the album features a style of rock music near and dear to his heart.

What are your thoughts on *Double Exposure*?

It's a little something different from me. It's going to be interesting to see how people react. UFO got grounded from touring and had a lot of shows fall through because of Covid. Nobody knew how long the lockdown would last. Is it going to be another month? A year? So, I got bored. I said, "Man, I gotta do something creative or I'm going to go nuts." So, I started writing.

What possessed you to add vocals?

It happened without being aware it was going to happen. I originally thought I'd make an EP of six instrumentals. But then I was listening to demos in my garage, and started singing with one of the songs. I realized it could be a cool vocal song. Listening to the other tunes, I realized *all* of them could be vocal songs. It was a light-bulb moment where I said, "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if I could do half vocal and half instrumental?"

Being in lockdown created an atmosphere where I felt like I could be experimental and do whatever. I had lots of vocal songs lying around – I go through periods where I write constantly, so I have a back catalog and I've always wanted to do a band thing with vocals. I'd been pretty busy with UFO, so I was waiting for the opportune moment, and it presented itself, so I look at it as a gateway for where I want to go next.

Does that mean a full-blown vocal rock record in the future?

That's definitely what I want to do next – with a permanent band and one singer. On *Double Exposure*, there are four singers. I thought it would be cool, and it made it easier to finish.

Are you using a DigiTech Whammy pedal?

It's not a Whammy pedal. It's two things; mostly it's the TC Electronic Sub 'N Up going an octave up, and a Fulltone Octafuzz that has a switch that takes it up to a higher octave. It's a bit nastier-sounding. There's one part where I had both on at once because I was A/B-ing, and it came out pretty gnarly. On "Breaking Through," I used software plug-ins for three-part harmony, and that might be the sound you're hearing. In the verses and the choruses, I used the Eventide Quadravox 4-Voice Diatonic pitch-shifter plug-in. It's made for vocals, but turned out great for that particular guitar part. I got to play live with a harmony above and a harmony below. It felt like instant Brian May (laughs).

Amps or plug-ins?

Mostly amps. On the last couple records, I used a 1980 Marshall JMP 100-watt head I've had since 1984. It sat around in my house for decades. I decided to pull it out one day and I was like, "Wow! How could I not have been using this amp?" It became my favorite head in the studio. I'm afraid to take it out on the road. I also bought a '65 Super Reverb and a reissue Deluxe Reverb, and I used an AmpliTube 5 for the modeling stuff, which is a great thing to add to the tone toolbox. It leads you in directions you might not have gone in with some of the pre-sets.

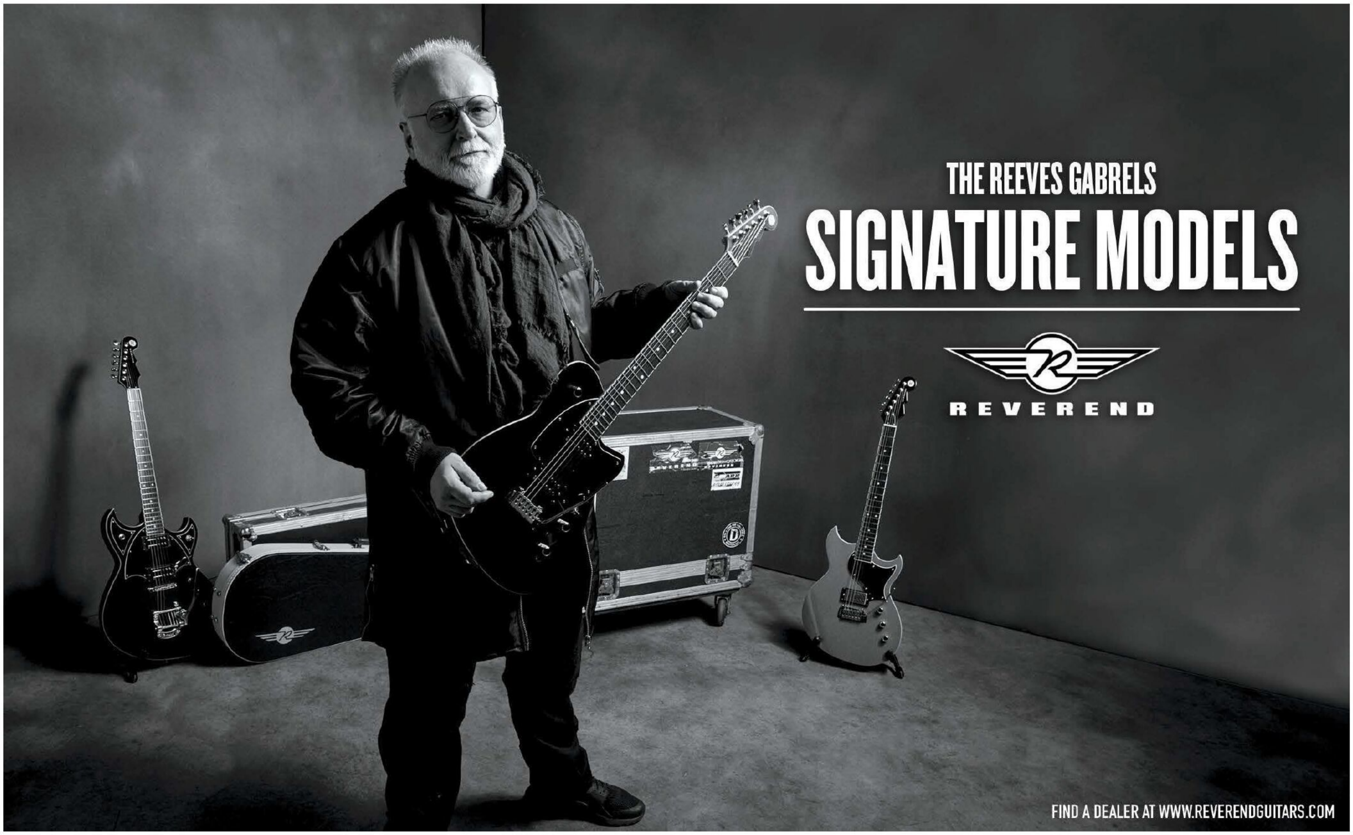
Which guitars did you use?

I'm with Kramer Guitars now, so I used those and an Epiphone SG. I also used my Dean Vinman 2000 Signature guitar and my Ibanez signature guitar from the '80s. Someone asked if I still had that guitar, so I posted a photo on Facebook. I was recording a solo, so I tried it, and it worked. I also used a Fender Jaguar for different tones.

Listening to "Southern Highway" and "Hummingbird," there's a Southern rock record in your future.

It could be (laughs), and you're right! I grew up playing Lynyrd Skynyrd and Molly Hatchet covers and listening to a lot of that stuff. A lot of people probably wouldn't know that. I haven't shown too much of that until recently. ***– Oscar Jordan***

Vinnie Moore: Gretchen Johnson.



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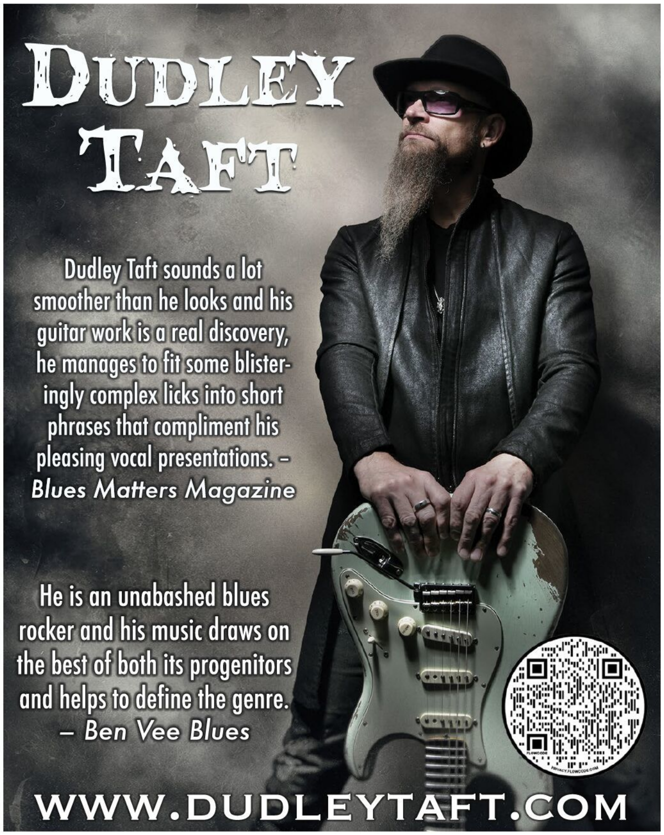

DUDLEY TAFT

Dudley Taft sounds a lot smoother than he looks and his guitar work is a real discovery, he manages to fit some blisteringly complex licks into short phrases that compliment his pleasing vocal presentations. – *Blues Matters Magazine*

He is an unabashed blues rocker and his music draws on the best of both its progenitors and helps to define the genre. – *Ben Vee Blues*

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Ron Bosse: Nick Swizzero.

RON BOSSE

Unison Groove

While Boston-based guitarist Ron Bosse was inspired to begin his six-string journey while listening to classic rock, he became a jazz player and has been active for decades.

"The first instrument I learned was saxophone, in fourth grade," he recently recalled to *VG*. "When I got to high school, I joined the jazz band as a saxophonist, which was right around the time I also started to play guitar. After about two years, I started playing guitar in the jazz band, so my first real experience playing guitar in a band was doing jazz."

Not surprisingly, Bosse is a graduate of the Berklee College of Music, and he ventured into the business of music by founding the Bosse School of Music, and Bosse Studios.

While expressing admiration for players such as Lee Ritenour and Mike Stern, he said, "For me, it's all about the two Pats – Metheny and Martino. From Metheny, I get a certain way of moving around the neck from a technical perspective; he has this way of using hammer-on and pull-offs when playing lines that give him a very fluid, horn-like approach. From Martino, I get a type of feel and an approach to soloing. Simply put, Martino swings harder than any guitarist I've ever heard."

Bosse's recent album, *Burning Room Only*, leans heavily on the groove-jazz mode with a dollop of fusion. For the first time in his career, he opted for a collaborative focus.

"I've been a highly active composer since being a student at Berklee," he detailed. "Prior to recording *Burning Room Only*, all the jazz songs I'd written were composed by me alone. For the new album, however, I wrote all the songs with Grammy-winning producer and keyboard player Jeff Lorber. I've found the approach to be extremely rewarding and feel that collaboration can yield an end result that's more unique than just going about it alone."

While there's ample improvised soloing on the album, listeners will also notice a lot of unison playing, as Bosse's guitar goes one-on-one with saxophone, keyboards, and a horn section.

"Compositionally, I think you'd lose the punch of the lines if they were harmonized," he said. "The unison approach tends to be more effective and also helps establish the melody better for the listener."

Many of the songs feature dazzling, almost "bubbling" double-time riffs.

"Those lines use specific techniques I've spent a great deal of time working on," Bosse explained. "Having good technique is especially important to me, and I've studied a lot of burning players from a variety of genres, including John Petrucci, Al Di Meola, Joe Bonamassa, and Eddie Van Halen."

Bosse used his '89 Gibson ES-347 almost exclusively on *Burning Room Only*.

"I've been playing it my entire career," he said. "My previous guitar, which my dad bought me, was a Les Paul Custom. When I started gravitating to jazz, I wanted to get a semi-hollow because I was a big fan of John Scofield. Only problem was I wanted the exact feel of the Les Paul Custom – I absolutely did not want an ES-335. I told the store owner what I was hoping to find, and he said, 'The ES-347 is exactly what you're looking for!'

"It's got great, low action, which I love, and gets a beautiful clean sound. I always play the neck pickup to get a fatter, more-rounded tone, and I'll typically set the Tone control at three to give it a hint of brightness, but also to preserve the slightly darker tone I love."

A sunburst Stratocaster figured slightly into the mix.

"My Strat is great for getting a searing, distorted rock sound and for clean rhythm parts. I used it for some rhythm parts on the album, though it was minimal."

After trying several amps for the record, he discovered, "The approach that gave me the cleanest possible sound was to go direct into my Apogee Symphony preamps. I added a long-hall reverb and stereo delay, and it sounded great. The only exception is on 'Strutter,' where I played the solo through one of my Orange amps, and it was perfect for that."

Bosse and Lorber have written four songs for a follow-up album. Other plans include touring and live videos. – ***Willie G. Moseley***

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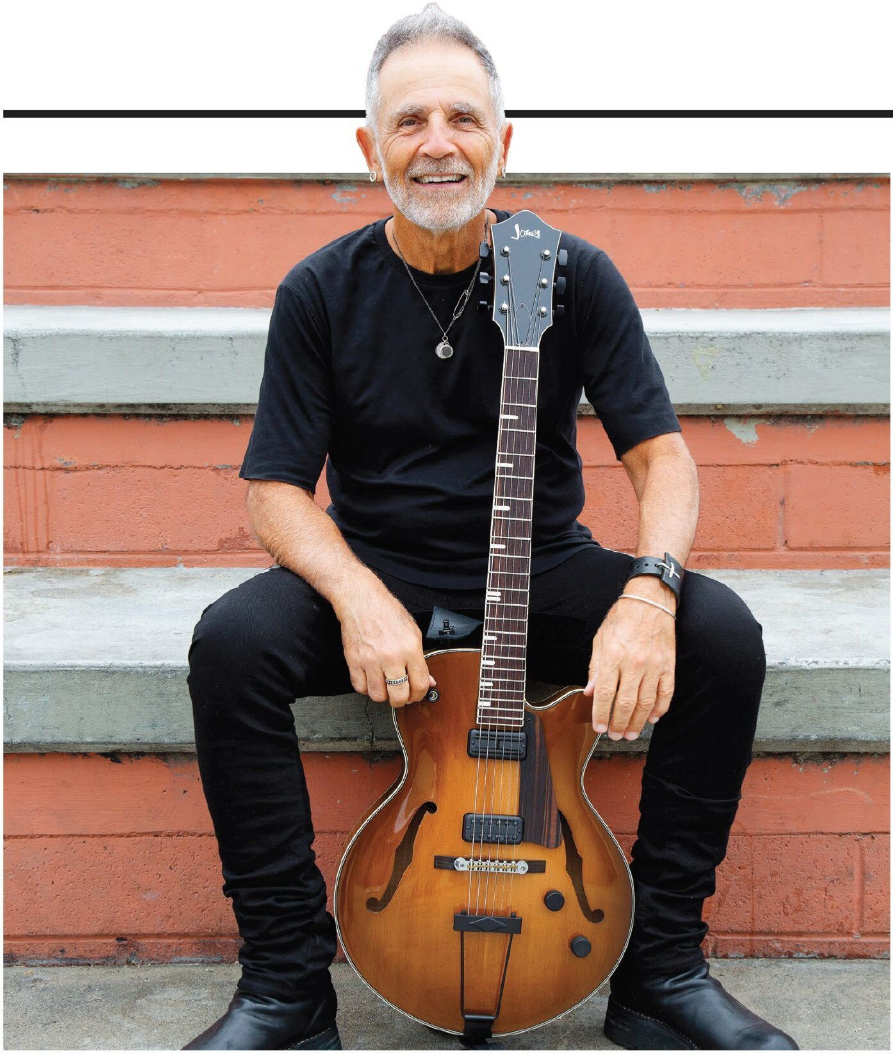

Thom Rotella: Larry Hirshowitz.

THOM ROTELLA

Chart Topper

Sitting with his TV Jones custom archtop, exploring "Unit 7" – the tune made famous by Cannonball Adderley and Wes Montgomery – Thom Rotella says, "For years, I played everything in octaves – even scales. I actually had to re-learn how to play single-string lines and at first I was really lost. And even today, I've never heard anyone play octaves that isn't reminiscent of Wes, who is my hero."

But Rotella is nothing if not comprehensive. For instance, his *Storyline* and *Out of the Blues* albums present seriously creative arrangements of standards and originals while his chart-topping smooth-jazz releases offer hip renditions of feel-good drive music.

Rotella grew up in Niagara Falls and experienced a circuitous road on his way to what has become a remarkable career. At age 10, he studied guitar with John Morell, who also taught a young Tommy Tedesco.

"I was surrounded by all these photos of Tommy," Rotella says. "Every time I'd go to my lesson I'd hear about him. One day, John said, 'You went through the first book faster than anyone I ever had. But then Tommy Tedesco took the longest.' (laughs) Anyway, when buying records I'd always look for Tommy's name. So even then I knew that someday I was going to California to be a guitar player."

Rotella kept at it throughout high school before eventually hitting the road for professional seasoning with various lounge bands. But as his career path developed, he wisely stopped long enough at the Berklee School of Music to study with heavyweights Bill Leavitt and Gary Burton, who helped educate and conceptualize what the young artist needed.

After more equivocation and consultation from other mentors and masters, Rotella decided to realize his dream of settling in L.A. There in the early '70s, he played in two or three rehearsal bands every day, gathered contacts, and did whatever was necessary to establish his visibility.

"I think I met every guitar player in L.A. *but* Tommy Tedesco," he laughs. "But I didn't want to contact Tommy despite my dad relentlessly encouraging me to do so. I wanted to make it on my own."

But fate stepped in. Rotella's dad happened to play golf with Tedesco when the guitarist returned to Niagara Falls for a visit.

"After their round, Dad told me, 'Here's his phone number, he *wants* you to call.' So I called, and found out I was living around the corner from him. Tommy said, 'What are you doing right now? Come over.' How could I not? The guy's a legend. I knock on the door and he answers wrapped up in a big towel. He asks me to list all of players I'd met and says, 'So you know everybody in town but me.' Then he asked me to play something.

"Soon after, he arranged for me to accompany him to several studio dates so I could see first-hand what he did. But perhaps more important, he invited me to Sunday dinner with the family. I went, and never really left. I became the fourth Tedesco brother."

Rotella went on to establish a career as a first-call session player. In addition to studio dates for television shows, movies, jingles, and TV commercials, his long string of studio sessions included playing on hit records for any number of artists.

Today, Rotella is very focused on straight-ahead and smooth jazz for his Street Talk label.

"I still do 'Family Guy' and 'American Dad' with Walter Murphy, which has been happening for nearly 20 years. That's a good, basic gig, and I've been creating my albums, library music, TV commercials, and of course playing sessions and gigging with a live band that features Walter's horn charts. Also, people will send me tracks to play on, but, basically, I've been working on my jazz stuff, both straight-ahead and smooth jazz, and just learning how to play better."

"In 2019, Chris Standring offered to produce some material to get me onto the smooth-jazz format. He promised me a hit, and the first single with him, 'Eddie's Ready,' an homage to Eddie Harris, went to #1 on the *Billboard* Smooth Jazz charts. We followed with two singles every year, all charting in the Top 20, including a #3 with 'Street Talk.'

"In February, I'll release a compilation of singles from the last four years and new tracks. It'll be called *Say Hey!* and will coincide with the next single release." ***– Jim Carlton***

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YATES McKENDREE

Blues Emotion

Yates McKendree hasn't yet turned 22, but he has already digested a lifetime's worth of American roots music.

The proof is in his debut album, *Buchanan Lane*, which is named for the street where he makes his home in Franklin, Tennessee. A 13-song collection, it reflects varied musical influences including blues icons like B.B. King and T-Bone Walker, New Orleans R&B keyboardist James Booker, and B-3 master Jimmy McGriff.

"I wanted this to be an amalgamation of the American music I love and grew up with," he explains. "I also wanted it to be marketable, and want people to actively listen to it. But really, my goal is to introduce traditional blues to a younger audience – take it back to being a popular form of American music, because it's relevant. And I think if you emotionally convey it the right way, people can understand it."

A self-taught musician, McKendree was a teen when earned a Grammy for his engineering work on Delbert McClinton's *Tall, Dark & Handsome*. He's been playing guitar since he was five years old, but he was banging on the drums at two and started on the piano shortly thereafter; his father, Grammy-winning keyboardist Kevin McKendree, was McClinton's longtime bandleader.

McKendree used a '67 Gibson ES-175 as the primary workhorse for *Buchanan Lane*.

"It's all original," McKendree says of the ES-175. "I did take the neck pickups out and flipped the magnet so it's out of phase in the middle position, to get the T-Bone Walker tone, or really just an early-blues sound. Some Freddie King songs have it. Probably the most famous out-of-phase tone would be Peter Green. It's just a sound, a tonality that I've always loved. But I don't tend to do a bunch of mods to my guitars. I just kind of pick 'em up and play 'em."

You'll hear the 175 on the swinging "Brand New Neighborhood," an early-'50s song by Fletcher Smith, Tampa Red's "Please Mr. Doctor," and a pair of T-Bone Walker covers, "Papa Ain't Salty" and "No Reason."

For several other songs, McKendree employed a modern Gibson SG Special, including the Walker-esque slow-blues original "No Justice," and the standout track "Wise," a minor-key effort that evokes B.B. King's "The Thrill Is Gone." The tune puts McKendree's versatility on full display, as he also plays drums, bass, and the B3.

No matter the guitar, the amp was consistent throughout – a '71 Super Reverb. "It's all original," he says. "Original speakers – I think it has replaced tubes. There's something about a Super Reverb that just gets the tone for me. There's a depth and airiness to it that I just can't find with any other amps."

For strings, it's D'Addario NYXL .010s and .011s, "Depending on what I'm feeling. They hold up for all those bends."

Yates literally grew up in a recording studio. The family's suburban Nashville home includes The Rock House, a studio owned and operated by Kevin. But despite the father's standing as veteran of studio and stage, he downplays any substantial role in Yates' musical upbringing.

"I always joke that when his mother was pregnant, I used to put headphones on her, so Yates would hear all my favorite music," the elder McKendree said. "Junior Walker was a huge one – and I always go, 'All that must have worked.' But with your kids, you want to steer them toward what *they* are interested in, and he's always been interested in music. So for him, it's been nurture and nature. [The music] was in him, and he was fortunate to grow up and have a recording studio in his backyard."

For Yates, 2023 looks hopeful and wide open, despite pandemic headwinds that continue to pose challenges for working musicians. He's weighing options, including a possible Nashville residency. Bottom line is he just wants to play.

"For me, it's the love of the music," Yates explains. "I want people to understand that, and I want people to grasp the emotional aspect of the blues, how relatable it is, and how current it can be, if you think about it. Blues is not exposed to the masses, but everybody who isn't a music fiend – every regular, run-of-the-mill person I've played my music for – is like, 'Yeah, I understand that. It's emotional. I feel it. I get it.' And that's why I think if you can get it in front of a bigger audience, it can be widely understood, because it's just an emotion, really." ***– Sean McDevitt***

Yates McKendree: Kenneth Blevins.

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Anthony Gomes: David Phobst.

ANTHONY GOMES

Blues, Rock, and Joy

Blues-rock connoisseur Anthony Gomes stays on point with his latest, *High Voltage Blues*. Leaning into the heavier side, Gomes' feisty recipe of catchy tunes, smokin' licks has gained him a loyal following, and a new record deal. But he doesn't kick out the jams for the reasons one might expect.

Did you take time off or go to work when the pandemic hit?

I worked harder than ever. In life, you gotta make the best of any given situation. Sometimes you're given a sh*t sandwich, but it's gonna be the best damn sandwich going (laughs). I feel like we're going to have a renaissance, artistically, that will afford those who make art a luxury they didn't have before. We had to justify going out on tour to pay our bills and playing 150 dates a year. Now we get to do it like the big boys – take a year off, maybe longer, make a record, and learn more about your craft. It was a challenge, but it was also an opportunity.

Is that how *High Voltage Blues* came about?

Yes. We were discovered by Rat Pak Records. In the 20 years of that label, we were the only artist they approached in the blues-rock vein. The president said, "I drank the Kool-Aid. I like what you do, and I can market you to a whole other side. People in the rock arena will like what you're doing, and we can get you out there." That opportunity may not have happened if it wasn't for the pandemic.

Do you ever think about playing a different style of music?

Now and then, it's important to grow and stray, but quickly return to your brand. You can tinker with the secret sauce, but we arrived in our lane because I love traditional blues and B.B. King and Buddy Guy. Every time I pick up the guitar, there's that. But I also love Ritchie Blackmore, Billy Gibbons, Eddie Van Halen, Jeff Beck, and Zakk Wylde. I say I have a blues soul and a rock-and-roll heart, and maybe that's where my lane is. I try to be honest, and sometimes, in the beginning, it didn't fit neatly into either lane, but by us doing it long enough and building a fan base, people are taking to this different lane. I make music for the fans. If I want to do something self-indulgent, I can do it for my own enjoyment. I'm grateful people are listening to what we do.

What are your key pieces of gear?

My workhorse guitar's are a '66 Strat and a '65 Strat, which are player's guitars with humbuckers and single-coils. I also have a Custom Shop Les Paul that's remarkable, a Malcolm Young Signature Jet, and a Custom Shop Fender Tele Master Built by Todd Krause.

This may sound sacrilegious, but I used a Kemper on the entire record. Initially, I bought one because I wanted a good guitar tone that I could track with, then run through a real amp. Then I realized that if I worked hard and miked my real amps for several hours, I could make it sound as good as my Kemper (laughs).

It's not the sexy answer, but it works for us. Billy Gibbons' biggest record was done with a drum machine and a Rockman. I still have all my old vintage amps, but I love to plug in and play. The Kemper allows me to do that with a variety of tones. I'm a big fan of what Michael Britt does with his tones – it's a marriage of vintage amps and modern technology. But I'm still a huge fan of vintage tones.

What's the story behind your Flying V?

I call it my midlife-crisis guitar (laughs). I told my guitar tech I needed a Gibson Flying V. He said, "Get one from 2002." So, I went online and found a 2002 Flying V. When I hit a couple of chords, it was like, "Oh yeah, this is it!" It stays in tune and sounds great in the studio. It's a wonderful instrument. I love Michael Schenker, Albert King, and anything Hendrix used.

Your lyrics are very positive. Is that intentional?

When I started in music, I was making no money and had to take out a big loan to buy a van to tour. Making $300 a night, and you gotta ask, "Why am I doing this?" I made an effort early on to say, "I want to make this world a better place, bring joy to people, and put smiles on their faces." I want to take people away from their lives if they're going through tough times. Music is such a healing and positive force. I want to bring joy to a crazy world. So how can you be upset when you're playing guitar? (laughs)
– Oscar Jordan

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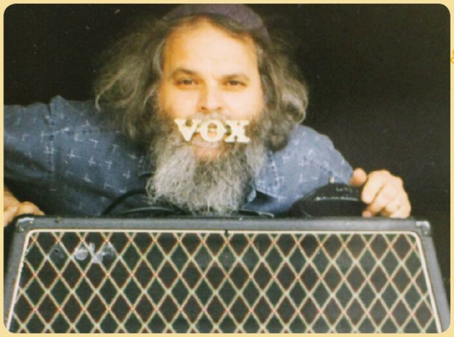

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Acoustic Archtops

Colletti 17" Tribute Custom 2003, Blonde, exc	**@950**
D'Angelico New Yorker, 1962, sb, cutaway, nm, ohsc	$65,500
Gibson Style U Harp Gtr, 1907, Black, 21", exc-, ohsc	**$6900**
Gibson L-7C, 1964, sb, Johnny Smith pu, vgc, ohsc	$4500
Gibson L-1, 1918, Blonde, vgc+, was Willy Deville's, ohsc	$2750
Gibson L-1, 1918, sunburst, vgc+, ohsc	**$2000**
Guild Artist Award, 1964, sb 17" cutaway, exc	$7500
Kay N-1, ca 1959, 17" cutaway , new frets, plays great.	$995
Maccaferri Plastic guitar, G-40 Archtop, '50s, exc+, ssc	$795
Monteleone Eclipse, 1994, sunburst, 17"cutaway, Oval soundhole, X-braced top, 1 11/16" at the nut, exc	$45,000
Stromberg Master 400, Blonde, 1946, loudest!, ohsc	$35,000

Other Electrics

Carvin Double neck Model 11, c 1968, sb, Mandolin (1 pu) and Guitar (2 pu) necks, exc, ohsc	$3500
Danelectro Deluxe, 1959, wood grained Formica, 2pu	**$1250**
Duesenberg Starplayer TV+, Black, Bigsby	**$1950**
GIFFIN Style T, 2009, TV Yellow, Gibson P-90	**$1950**
Harmony (Alden) H 45 Stratotone, '63, tuxedo black	**$595**
Ibanez Custom Agent, model 2405, 1976, sunburst	$1950
Kelly Custom, NYC, ca 2008, Telec style, Peach, bound top, 3 hb, trem, Maple board, vgc+, hsc	**$2950**
National Glenwood 95, '63, White, Map guitar, exc, hsc	$4750
Nash T-59/Flametop, 2019, sb, T-style bod, 2 hb, exc	$2450
Raven , '70s Japan, slim hollowbody, 2 pu trem, vgc.	**$350**
Silvertone 1445, Teisco, c'68, Jap, sb, 3 pu, Sculpted	**$795**
Spalt Player's Choice Tool #2, NEW, 2 pu, natural	$3250
Teuffel Bird Fish, recent, 3 pu, leather case, exc	$8900
WANDRE Spazial, c 1963, reddish/grey, beautiful	$6950
Watkins Rapier 44, UK, Fiesta red, 4 pu, Trem, exc	$1250
Woody Phifer, Signature, ca 2005, figured Maple top, curly Maple back, sides & neck, exquisite, near mint	$7500
Yamaha SG1000, '80s, sb, 2 hb, was Mick Jones' w/ ID	$2900

Basses

ALEMBIC Europa 4-String, 1991, Flamed Walnut.	**$5950**
Alembic Scorpion 1984, nat blistered Maple, 2 pu, Brass hdwr, Neck-thru , LED, dual rods, 32" scale 24 frets	$9500
AMPEG AB-1, Scroll, refin, exc, hsc	**$3500**
Jazz Bass, 1976, 3-tone SB, Maple neck , vgc	**$3750**
Jazz Bass, 2005, '62 AVRI, Black, stacpot, gigbag	**$1950**
Gibson EB-0, 1961, Cherry, double cut LP Junior style	$3900
Gibson RD Artist Bass, 1979, Sunburst, exc, ohsc	$2400
Hofner Club Bass, 1965, sb, 2 staple pu, exc	**$3900**
Rickenbacker 4001,'79, Yellowed White, vgc, ohsc	**$3750**

Martins

D-45, 1941, Adir Spruce top, Brazil b&s Hexagon inlays, restored by John Arnold, vgc+, hsc	**$295K**
D-45L, 1940, the only pre-war Lefty D-45	**inquire**
F-9, 1936, flat top "42" converted byMonteleone,exc	**$45,000**
D-41, D-35V Brazilian RI, 1984, 1 of 50, soundgreat,ohsc	$6950
D-28 Aged Authentic, 2020, Ad top, Mad b&s, mint	**$6900**
D-28, 1974, all original, exc, blue case	**$3500**
000-28M Eric Clapton, LE, 2009, SB Style 45 rosette w pearl herringbone, Carpath Spruce top, Mad RW b&s, exc	$5900
D-12-18, 1973, 12-String, neck joins@14thfret, exc, hsc	$2500
00-21, Custom, 2021, 12 fret slotted pghd, exc, hsc	**$2450**
D-18, 1973, recent neckset, exc, hsc	**$2450**
D-18E Retro, 2014, all original, w/ pu, exc, ohsc	**$2450**
0018G, 1951 made for Gut or Nylon strings, vgc+	$2250
00-18, 1932, 12 fret slotted pshd, pg, vgc, hsc	**$11,500**
00-18, 1953, 2 top cracks - 1 fixed, vgc, hsc	**$5000**
0-18K, 1928, all Koa wood body, 12 fret, vgc, hsc.	$4950
C-1 Concert Uke, '50s, 3 tight back cracks rep, vgc+	$1150

Gibson & Epiphone Flat Tops

J-50, 1963, natural, lots of wear, vgc, hsc	**$2500**
J-200, 1966, SB, 2 rep top cracks, moustache bridge converted to bone saddle, bridge helper inside	$4950
LG-0, 1960, all Mahog, Braz Bridge, exc	**$1450**
LG-1, 1962, SB, 2 small crack repairs , exc-, ossc	**$1995**
J-35 Re-issue, Nat, Spruce top, Mahog b&s, exc-,ohsc	$2100
Epiphone Texan, 1965, natural top, worn, great, hsc	$2900
Epiphone Cortez, 1966, natural, 1 9/16" nut exc, hsc	$2250

Other Flat Tops & Classicals

BOZO, Jumbo, ca 1969, Spruce top, Brazilian b&s, exc	$4900
GUILD F-50, 1966, Blonde, jumbo, Maple b&s, vgc+	**$4500**
GUILD F-312, 1965, small jumbo 12-string, Spruce top Brazilian b&s, plays great, some repairs, vgc, hsc	$3250
Guild D-40, 1968, Cedar top, Mahogany b&s, theBest	$3750
Guild F-30NT, 1971, 000-size, exc, hsc	$1950
Guild MK II, 1980, Classical guitar , exc+, hsc	$695
Huss&Dalton 00-SP Custom, 2009, 12 fret, Engelmann top, Honduran RW , was Mary Chapin Carpenter's, hsc	$6500
Taylor 612C, 1995, cutaway curly Maple b&s , vgc+, ohsc.	$2000
Larrivee BARITONE BT-03, 2021, NEW, ohsc	$2100
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Contreras Classical, 1972, Cedar top, R wood b&s,exc	$5500
Jose Oribe Classic Suprema 1996, Brazilian, exc	$5500

Resonator, Steel & Slide Guitars

National Style 0, 1933, straight neck, vgc, ohsc	**$4500**
National Delphi Deluxe, & NRP Rust,	New In Stock
National Tricone Style 1, 2000, nickel/silver, nm ohsc	**$3750**
Dobro, '30s Roundneck, sb, 2 screen holes, hsc	**$1495**
Epiphone Electar Lap Steel,'40s, sunburst	**$695**
Rick Lap Steel, B8, 1948, Bakelite 8 string	**$1250**
Rick Deluxe Lap Steel, silver w/gold, exc, ohsc	$1400

Mandolins & Banjos

Gibson H-2 Mandola, 1923, reddish burst, adj rod, exc+,	$5000
Gibson F-5, 1957, new top by Paul Newson,Fern, exc	**$5900**
F-4, 1928, sb, adj rod, a beauty, great tone, exc, ohsc.	$6000
Gibson A-2-Z, 1924, Snakehead, blonde, exc, ohsc	$4000
Kentucky KM-1500, New, top of the line, ohsc	**$2875**
Bacon Professional 3, 5-string c. 1925, exc	$2500
Vega White Laydie #2, 1921, vgc+, ohsc	**$2500**
Vega Tub-a-phone #3 5-string, carved heel, exc	**$2400**
Gibson PB-3 Mastertone Plectrum 1925, 60 holeArchtop.	$2400
Gibson RB-4 Mastertone Archtp, '32, Monteleone neck	$7900
Paramount Aristocrat Tenor c 1926, gold plated ohsc, vgc	$1295

Amps

Bogner Goldfinger 45 Watt head & 2-12 Bottom, exc	**$2100**
COLBY Lil Darlin combo, NEW, 2022, white	$1350
Dr Z Maz 38 Senior Head & 2x10 cab, Red, exc+	$1850
Fender Bassman Head & 2x12 Cab,'66, exc	**$2250**
Fender Champ, 1962, Tweed, 8" speaker, all original	**$3250**
Deluxe Reverb, 1972, Silver Panel, vgc+	$2250
Deluxe Reverb LtdEd '65 RI in Blue tolex, 2009, mint	**$1495**
Dual Showman Head, 1968, drip-edge, modded	**$995**
Vibrolux 1960, Tweed, Jensen P-10R re-coned	**$6500**
Fender TWIN Reverb, 1965, 2-12" Utahs, vgc	**$2250**
FulltoneTube Tape Echo, White, gigbag, exc.	**$1950**
Gibson GA-40, 1955, 2-tone brown, exc+	**$3500**
Magnatone Troubador 213, 1964, 1 Jensen C12R 12"	$1495
Magnatone Custom 460 ,1961, 2 12" Oxfords, Trem, exc	$2195
McINTOSH MC 2505 SSPower Amp, vgc+	**$1150**
National 1275 , '51, Valco, Tweed TV front, orig 10" vg	**$995**
Silvertone 1344A c.1953, maroon w/ silver, vgc	**$650**

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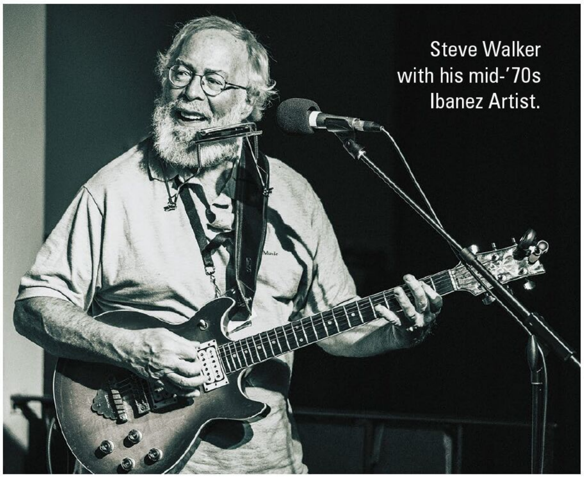


Steve Walker with his mid-'70s Ibanez Artist.

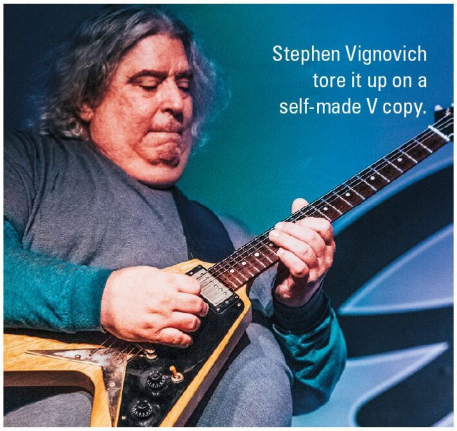
FALL PHILLY JAM

VG Sponsors Post-Show Party

After the Great American Guitar Show (a.k.a. Fall Philly) closed its day-one festivities November 5, staffers and friends of *Vintage Guitar* gathered at the Soundbank Music Room and Taphouse in downtown Phoenixville, where an impromptu house band that included *VG*'s James Jiskra and Johnny Zapp along with drummer Bruce Halper, played and backed other players on tunes by everyone from the Rolling Stones to Link Wray.

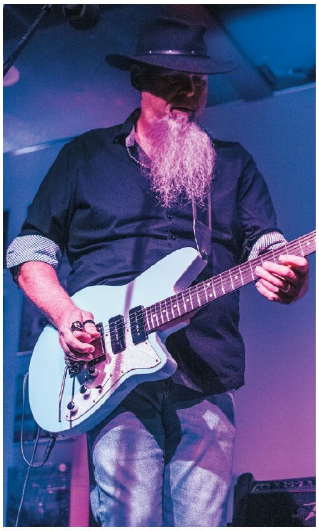
The event was sponsored by Earthboard Pedalboards, Bikers Against Drunk Drivers, EMG Pickups, Gibson Guitars, Reverend Guitars, Mondell Guitars, Port Noise Marketing, Midwood Guitar Studio, Joe's Vintage Guitars, and the Soundbank.

VG will host a jam after the second day of the Amigo California World Guitar Show, January 28 at the Anaheim House of Blues. **VG**

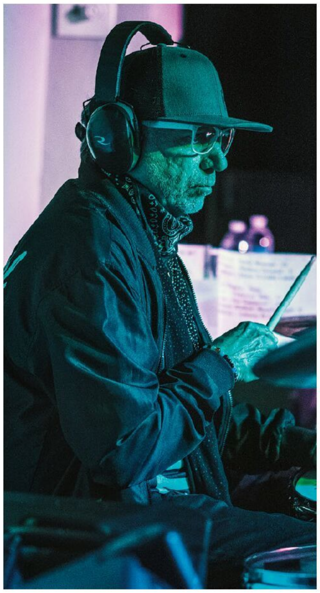


Stephen Vignovich tore it up on a self-made V copy.

Johnny Cola on a Reverend Slingshot. Calla Bere sang "Stormy Monday."



VG Advertising Director James Jiskra opened the jam on a Reverend Jetstream, doing a Charles Ford Band cover of "Wild Woman."



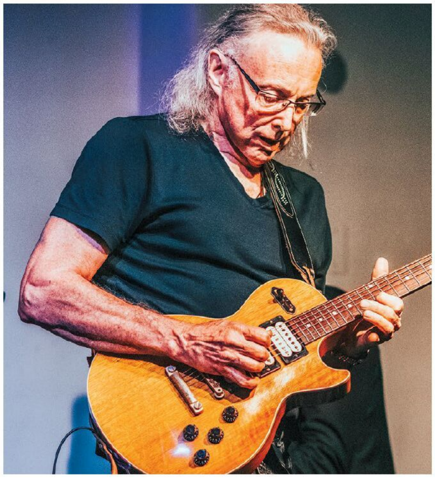
Drummer Bruce Halper provided rock-solid backing all night.

Photos by Price Stevenson.

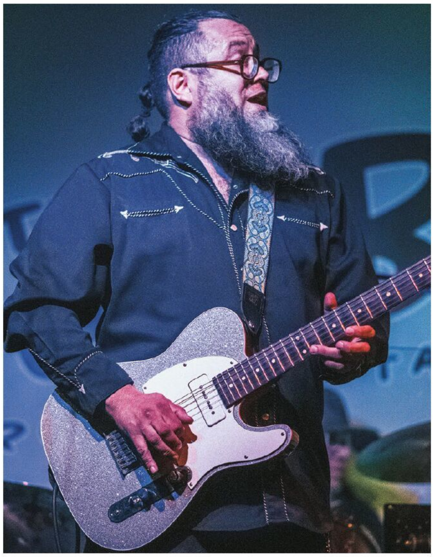
Charlie Apicella with his '63 Guild Artist Award.

Tobin Dale, Rumbleseat Music, on a metal-front Mondell.

Mark Bradley, Earthboard Pedalboards, with his Les Paul Traditional.



Bill Holter and his Custom Shop Korina Tribute Les Paul playing the finale blues instrumental.



Rudy Jaramillo jammin' his Reverend Eastsider.

Robert Mondell rocked one of his custom creations.

Gil Parris on his signature Reverend with *VG* account rep Johnny Zapp on a Mondell bass.

Robert Mondell, Tobin Dale, Calle Bere, and Johnny Zapp

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Fender CS LTD Big Head Strat '19, $3000
Suhr Classic S Antique Custom, Vintage White, $2450
Anderson Bobcat, Lemon Drop,"Distressed" $3350
Collings 290DC Crimson, vgd cond, $2950
Gibson Les Paul DC Std '02 flamed, exc cond, $2250
Guild CE-100 '59, Sbst, $1950

VINTAGE/USED ACOUSTIC

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Gibson Country & Western '58, exc+ cond.... call
James White '43 Hauser Model, '11, exc, $4500
Goodall Aloha w/Koll Baritone neck $3750
Muiderman OM cutaway '06, superb! $7500

ARCHTOPS

Gibson Style U Harp Guitar '19, exc cond, $7500
Gibson ES-125 '58, vgd+ cond, $1950
Stromberg G-3 '32, Sunburst, exc. cond, $7500
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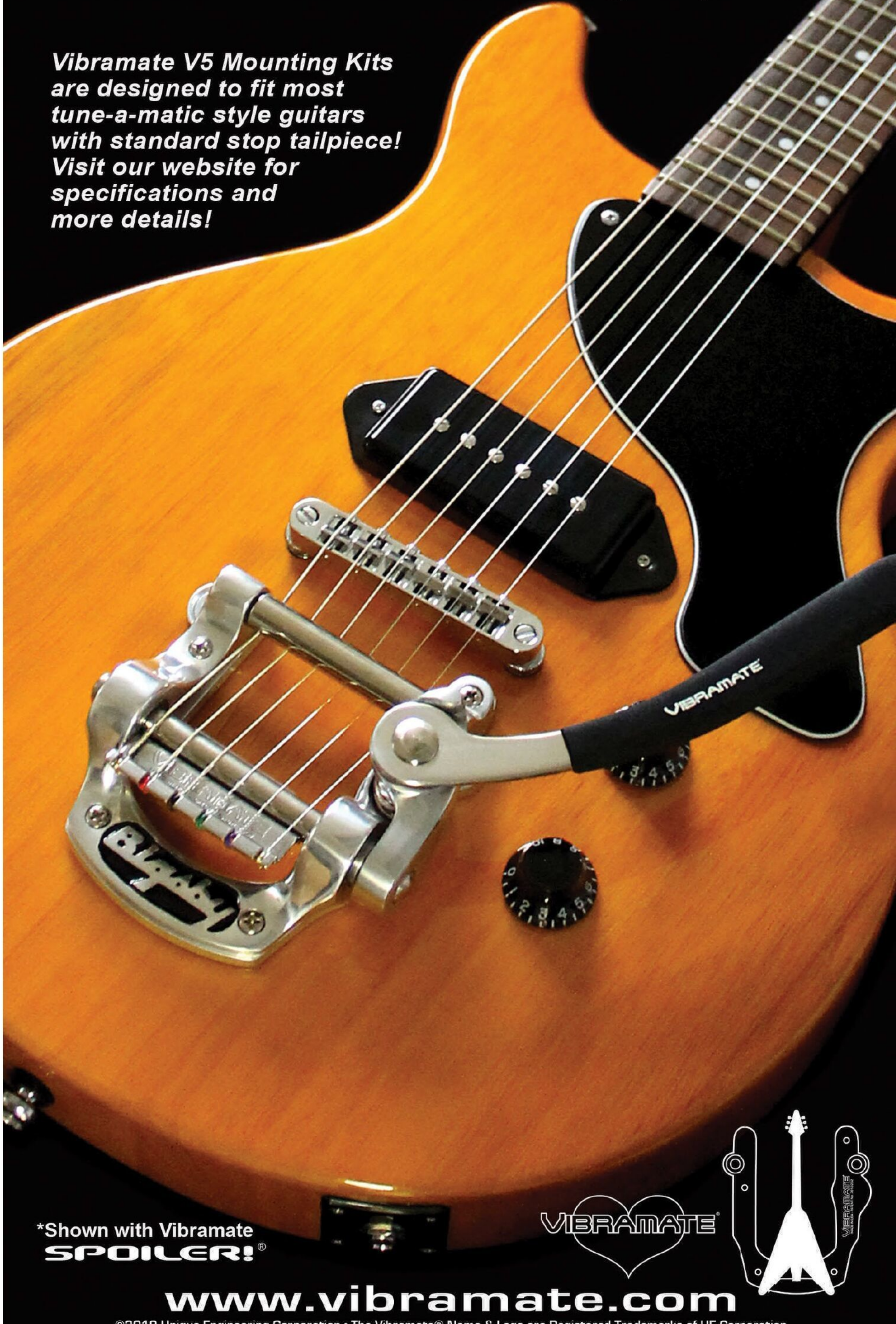

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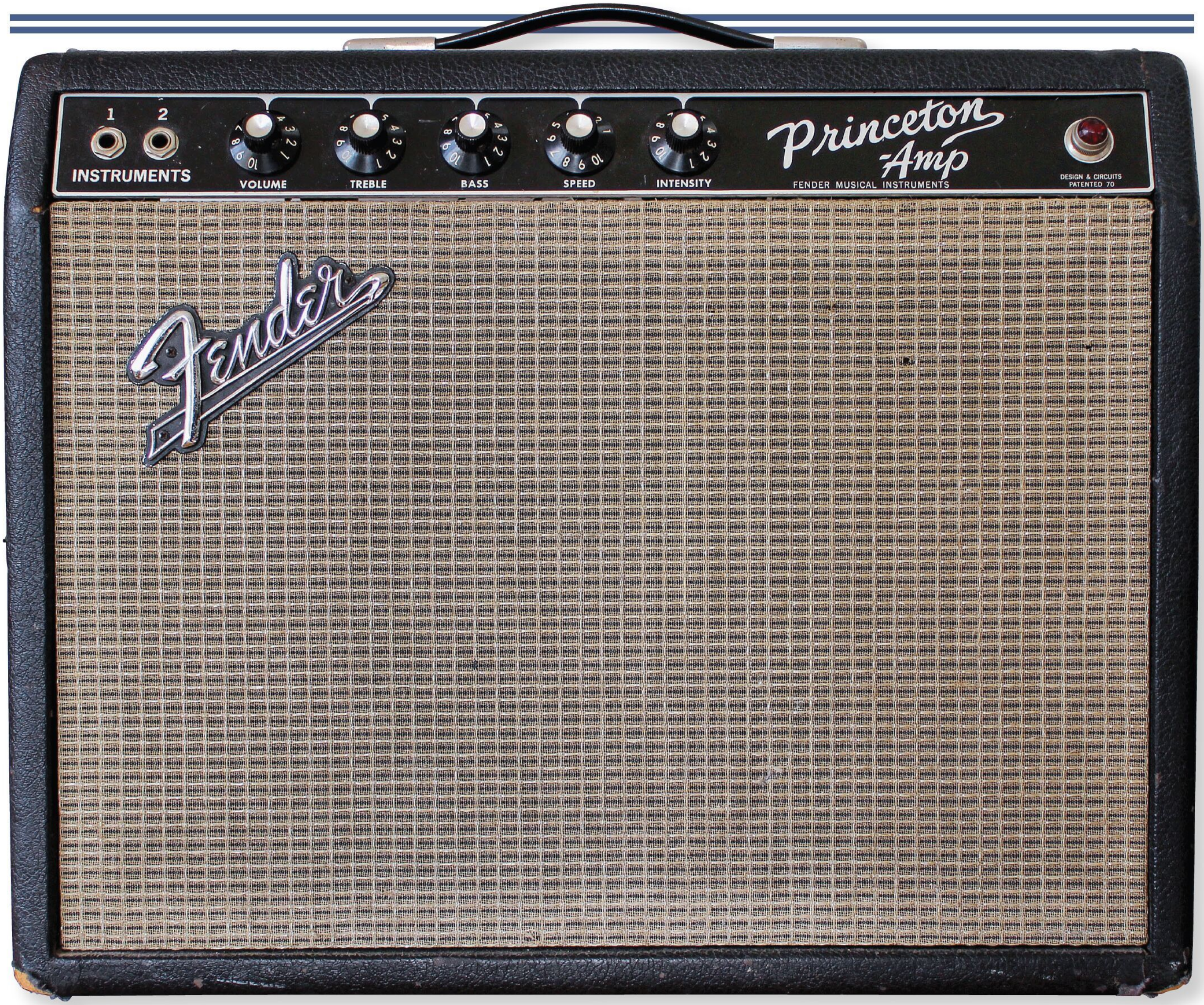
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Getting the job done – five simple knobs on the Princeton's control panel.

Photos by Dave Hunter.

WHAT'S (NOT) IN A NAME

The Fender AA964 Princeton

BY DAVE HUNTER

Fender's Princeton Reverb combo has long been considered one of the best all-round amps, while its non-reverb sibling languished in its shadow. The humbler '60s classic, though, presents bountiful charms of its own, and can even be the preferred vehicle in some situations.

1966 FENDER PRINCETON

- Preamp tubes: one 7025, one 12AX7
- Output tubes: two 6V6GT
- Rectifier: GZ34
- Controls: Volume, Treble, Bass, Tremolo Speed and Intensity
- Speaker: Single 10" Jensen C10R or Oxford 10J4 (modern replacement seen in this example)
- Output: approximately 12 watts RMS

Maybe you just couldn't afford the reverb model, or maybe you never liked reverb in the first place. Whatever the rationale, Fender saw the desirability of including both versions of some amps throughout

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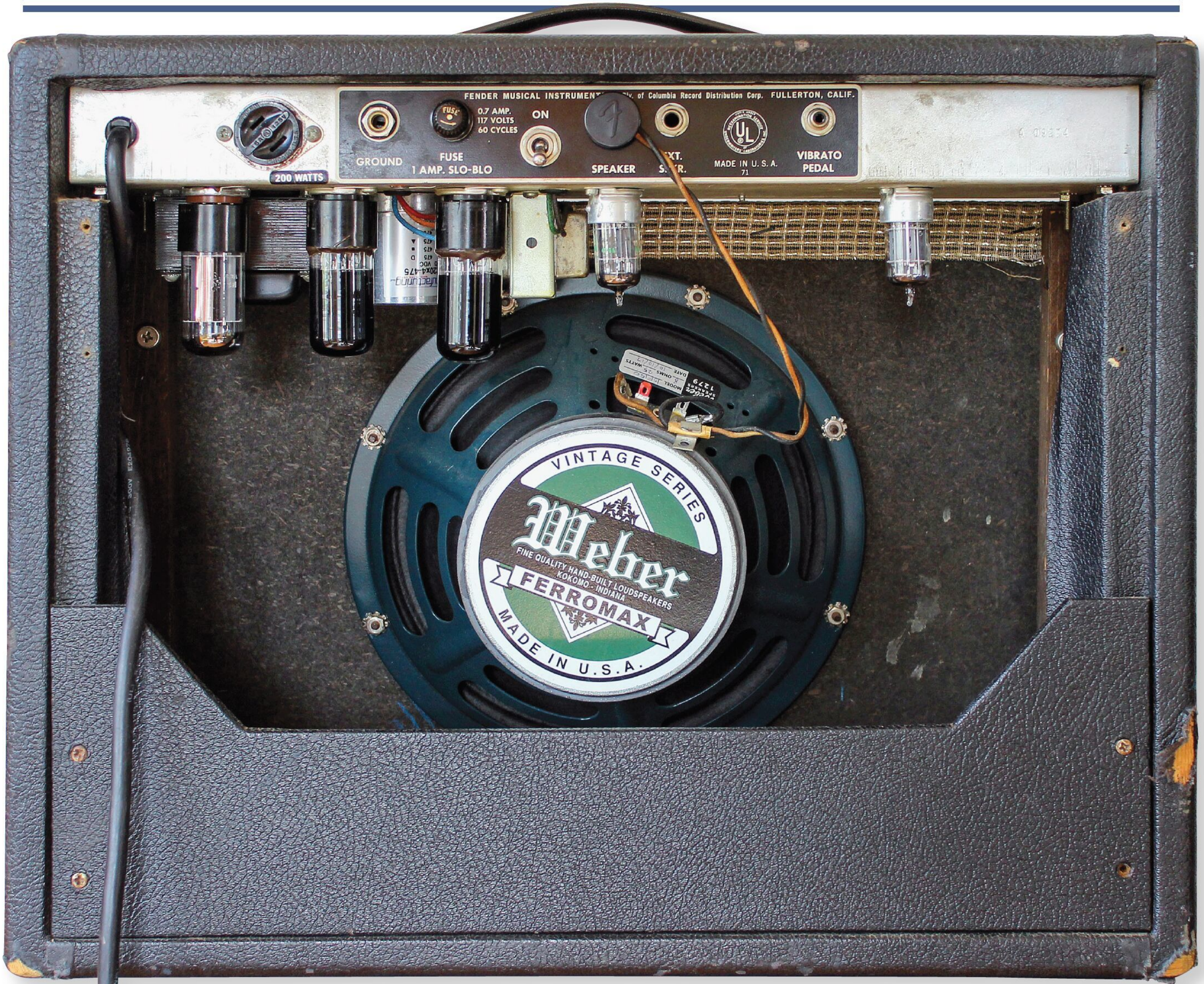
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The non-reverb Princeton generates a lot of tone from simple ingredients, with just two preamp tubes, two 6V6GT output tubes, and a GZ34 rectifier.

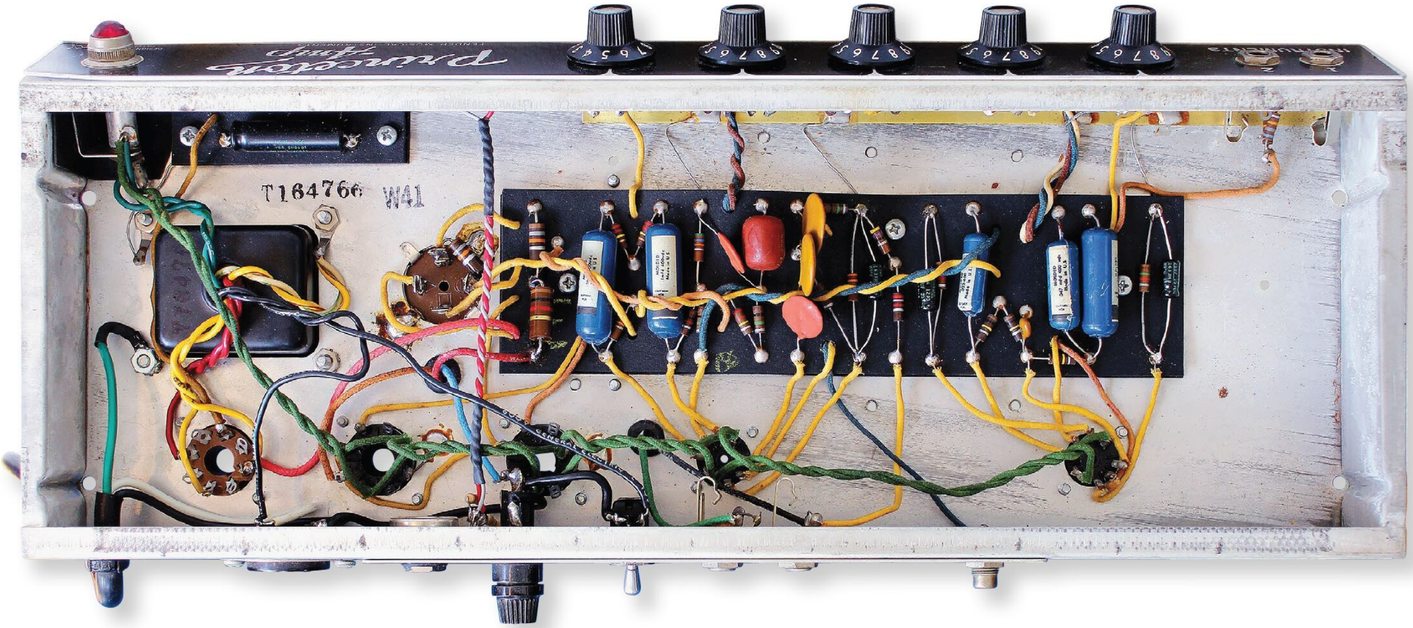
its glory years. The fabled Deluxe had a non-reverb version, as did the Pro and Bandmaster, but for all the bias toward reverb-laden small Fenders, the Princeton might be the most utilitarian.

Of course, the Princeton was *born* without reverb. Among Fender's very first amp models, it arrived in 1946 as the smallest combo in a trio that included the Deluxe and Professional in ascending order, all birthed when the delay-based effect wasn't even a glimmer in Leo Fender's eye – or anyone's for that matter.

Arriving with Fender's primitive "woody" cabinet, the Princeton took on the seminal tweed covering (a type of aircraft linen) in the TV-front cabinet of 1948. Through this period and until the end of the '50s, it remained a single-ended amp, meaning it had just one output tube, a configuration more familiar in the form of the diminutive Champ, which also joined the lineup in '48. At that time, the Princeton gained both a Volume and Tone control, which was two more knobs than it had been born with – the original theory being that players could use their lap-steel guitar's own controls to govern this "student" amp's volume.

Evolving into the wide-panel tweed cabinet circa late '52 and the narrow-panel in '55 (alongside the rest of the Fender amp lineup) the Princeton remained the second combo up the ladder. Though its circuit was virtually the same, barring the added Tone control, the Princeton was in a larger cabinet that helped its sound bloom, and had an 8" speaker versus the Champ's 6", before it too was upsized later in the '50s. Otherwise, through nearly the first decade and a half of its existence the Princeton had kind of remained "a Champ with benefits," and little more than a lower-rung student or beginner's amp.

All that changed in 1961. Along with revamping its entire amp lineup, Fender kicked the Princeton into the big leagues... or medium leagues, at least. The brown-panel 6G2 Princeton of 1961-'63 carried two 6V6GTs in a fixed-bias, push/pull output



Though it was built about a year after CBS' purchase of Fender, the '66 Princeton has the same circuit and carries all the laudable black-panel components as the pre-CBS examples. The adjustable bias control (with twisted gray/red wires extending behind the faceplate) is a modification.

stage that generated about 12 watts – all elements and specs we can apply to the black-panel Princeton you see here. The preamp had two 12AX7s (technically, the first position held an equivalent 7025), which is also the topology of the non-reverb Princeton that followed in black Tolex with black panel and black skirted knobs with silver-inserts in '63. From '61 onward, the Princeton jumped into a slightly larger cabinet with a single 10" speaker.

The result of all this was that, while it still made a great student amp, the combo was capable of cutting it on the club stage alongside a moderate drummer, and was arguably the ideal size and power for studio use.

Though the brown 6G2 Princeton of 1961-'63 and the black AA964 Princeton of '64-'67 had two preamp tubes for gain stages, tremolo, and phase inverter, and they outwardly appeared to have been applied to similar duties, a few differences in the configuration brought notable changes to the way these successive amps sounded. While the signal chain for each went input to gain stage to controls to gain stage to output stage, the single Tone control on the 6G2 drained less gain, leaving it hotter as it hit the output stage compared to the signal loss imposed by the AA964's two controls and circuit with Bass and Treble pots.

Whereas the AA1164 Princeton Reverb included another half of a 12AX7 post-reverb – a full third gain stage – to bring the gain back up to 6G2-like levels after the tone stack, the second and final gain stage of the non-reverb AA964 Princeton merely restored what the EQ circuit took away. This kept it all crisp and pristine on the way to the phase inverter, with little in line to push the amp into overdrive; therein lies the beauty of this circuit for certain playing styles.

Princeton
-Amp
FENDER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

In all of these '60s variations, the final preamp tube is split into two uses – half powers the simple-but-effective tremolo effect, the other forms a simple split-load phase inverter much like on the earlier tweed Deluxe and the larger tweed Super, Pro, Bandmaster, and low-powered Twin.

Put all of this together and the non-reverb Princeton doesn't sing with the gusto of its gained-up sibling, but that tendency can be used to a player's advantage; where the AA1164 Princeton Reverb can sound a little raw and haggard when pushed hard (especially with humbuckers), the AA964 remains throaty and articulate right up to 10 on the Volume control, delivering the early signs of succulent breakup when hit with a humbucker guitar or a set of P-90s, but barely edging beyond clean with single-coils, as on a traditional Strat or Tele or any vintage-voiced Gretsch. This also means the non-reverb Princeton retains impressive headroom for its size and rating, but it pairs very well with a good overdrive pedal or two in front, enabling a near-symbiotic merging of clean and overdrive tones, and arguably delivering more of the good stuff from each than the quicker-to-fold reverb amp. All that, and its luscious bias-modulated tremolo suffers not in the least from the amp's lack of reverb.

Though so often the underdog on the vintage market, the non-reverb Princeton ultimately reveals a thing of sonic beauty, and displays more of the characteristic that helped make black-panel Fenders legendary performers in the first place – some of the sweetest, liveliest clean tones ever produced this side of the Atlantic. **VG**

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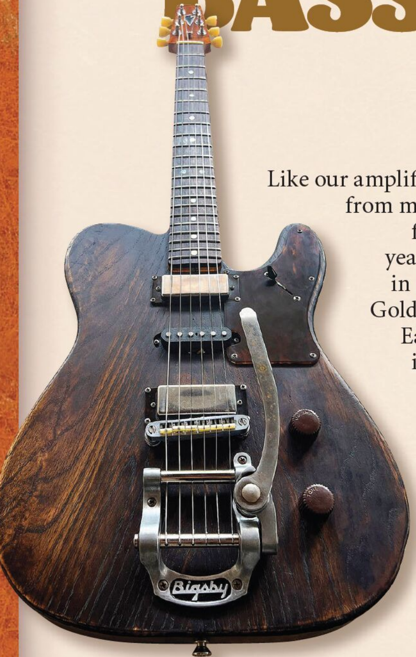

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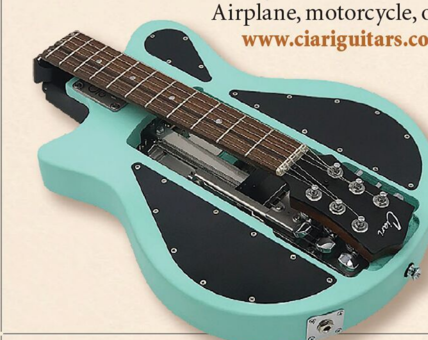

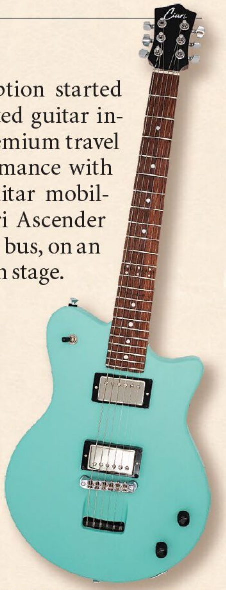

Gibson

The SG™ Standard '61 Faded Maestro™ Vibrola™ returns to the classic design that made it relevant, played, and loved — shaping sound across generations and genres of music. It features a satin nitrocellulose lacquer finish that gives it the look and feel of a long-treasured musical companion.
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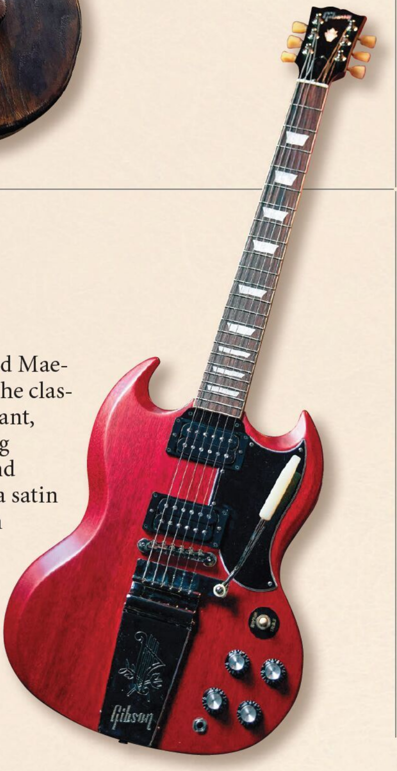


Epiphone Jack Casady Signature Bass

The Jack Casady Signature Bass was designed by Rock and Roll Hall of Fame legend Jack Casady and is the culmination of years of experimentation by the Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna bassist to find an instrument with superior electric tone. Featuring the Casady-designed JCB low-impedance pickup and a three-position rotary impedance control for a wide range of tonal versatility. **www.epiphone.com**

1) Reverend Guitars

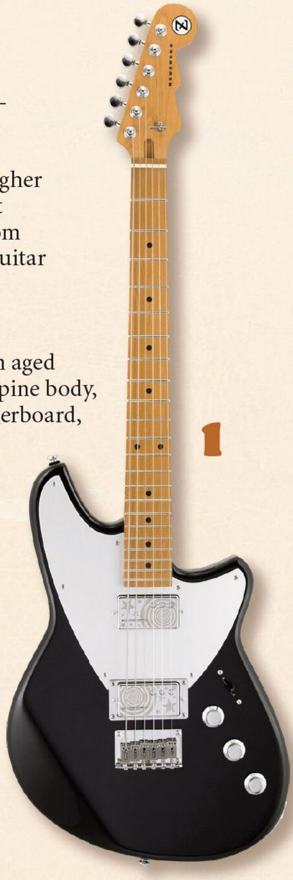
The Reverend Billy Corgan Z-One is for ripping big rock solos with a thick yet smooth tone. An alder body creates a thick tone. Deep cutaways provide easy access to the higher frets. Railhammer Z-One pickups have a fat midrange and a smooth top end, with custom artwork etched into the covers. It's a great guitar for heavier songs. **www.reverendguitars.com**

2) Maghini Guitars

This handcrafted Satellite model features an aged Fire-mist gold lacquer finish over a roasted pine body, roasted maple neck, Bolivian rosewood fingerboard, 25-1/2" scale with 21 frets and clay dot markers. Pickups are handmade in-house, a P-45 in the neck pairs nicely with the flat pole tele in the bridge. You can find more info at **www.maghiniguitars.com**

3) Martin Guitars

The SC-10E, with its patented Sure Align® neck system, gives players full access to all frets. Features include a satin finished sitka spruce top and stunning koa fine veneer back and sides. The rosette inlay is complimented by an ebony headplate, fingerboard, and bridge, black tuners and knobs. Comes with a soft-shell case or soft gig bag. Selection may vary. $1,299.00



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Price Guide

By Alan Greenwood & Gil Hembree

NEW & UPDATED LISTINGS

1936 National Style O

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND.	
			LOW	HIGH
1976	A-Bass Solidbody Bass		$1,050	$1,400
1981	Alembic Distillate Bass	Distillate 4	$2,600	$3,400
1992	Alembic Europa Bass	4 or 5 string	$3,000	$4,000
1990	Alembic Series I Bass	Highly figured	$5,000	$6,600
1987	American Showster AS-57-B Classic	USA	$4,000	$5,200
1998	Ampeg Dan Armstrong Lucite Reissue/ADA4 Bass		$750	$1,000
1980s	Aria Electric Bass	Various models	$400	$675
1965	Baldwin Shadows/ Shadows Signature Bass	Shadows	$1,450	$1,900
1978	BC Rich Bich Supreme 8-String Bass	Translucent wood	$4,100	$5,400
1976	BC Rich Mockingbird Bass	Painted	$2,100	$2,800
1978	BC Rich Nighthawk Bass		$675	$900
1989	BC Rich ST-III Bass	Class Axe era	$600	$800
1951	Bronson Model B Style (Rickenbacker) Steel		$850	$1,100
1964	Burns Nu-Sonic Bass		$925	$1,200
1986	Charvel Model 3 Bass		$525	$700
1970s	Conrad Electric Bass	Various models	$300	$600
1968	Coral Long Horn Bass	L2LB4	$1,425	$1,850
1968	Danelectro Bellzouki	2 pickups, pointy-body	$1,225	$1,600
1967	Danelectro Convertible	Pickup installed, natural	$575	$750
1967	Danelectro Dane D Series 12-string		$1,475	$1,900
1960	Danelectro Hawaiian Guitar		$1,050	$1,350
1979	Emmons S-10 Pedal Steel	Single neck	$1,975	$2,550
1987	ESP Eclipse Custom T (Import)	Neck-through	$900	$1,150
1990	ESP Horizon Deluxe (Import)		$925	$1,200
1959	Fender Champ Amp	Narrow panel, 1x8, 5F1	$2,500	$3,300
1964	Fender Jaguar	Lake Placid Blue	$7,400	$9,700
1961	Fender Jazz Bass	Lake Placid Blue, stacked	$26,000	$34,000
1960	Fender Jazzmaster	Lake Placid Blue	$15,000	$20,000
1951	Fender Precision Bass	Blond, slab body	$17,700	$23,000
1983	Fender Squire Jazz Bass Standard	1st logo	$450	$575
1982	Fender Standard Stratocaster	Smith Strat	$2,100	$2,800
1963	Fender Stratocaster	Lake Placid Blue	$25,000	$39,000
1959	Fender Telecaster	Blond, maple	$20,700	$27,000
1968	Fender Telecaster Bass	Black, nitro	$3,800	$5,000
1968	Fender Telecaster Bass	Blond, nitro	$2,700	$3,600
1962	Fender Tremolux Amp	Rough white and oxblood, 2x10	$2,700	$3,500
2001	Flatiron F Mandolin	Festival, made Bozeman MT	$3,100	$4,100
1990	G & L Comanche V (early model)		$1,225	$1,600
2020	G & L Fullerton Deluxe Dohney		$1,050	$1,350
1985	Gallagher A-70 Ragtime Special		$1,450	$1,900
1923	Gibson A-2Z Mandolin	Loar era, extra binding	$4,800	$6,300
1966	Gibson EB-3 Bass		$2,800	$3,600
1962	Gibson EB-6 Bass	Cherry, SG-style	$9,700	$12,600
1923	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar Feb 8, 1923	$78,000	$102,000

Eric Newell with a 1979 Gibson Les Paul Custom silverburst.

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1924	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Loar Feb 18, 1924	$78,000	$102,000
1933	Gibson F-5 Mandolin	Fern peghead	$25,000	$33,000
1964	Gibson Firebird I	Sunburst, reverse, hardtail	$12,900	$16,700
1963	Gibson Firebird III	Polaris White	$12,000	$15,600
2021	Gibson Firebird Johnny Winter 1964 Firebird V	COA	$7,000	$9,000
1979	Gibson GK-55 Active		$825	$1,075
1968	Gibson Flying V (Mahogany)	sunburst	$17,500	$22,600
1993	Gibson Gospel Reissue	Reissue specs	$1,375	$1,800
1918	Gibson GY (Army-Navy)	Flat top, trapeze, no binding	$800	$1,050
1929	Gibson HG-22 (Hawaiian)		$4,800	$6,300
1942	Gibson J-45	Banner, Adirondack top	$10,800	$14,200
1957	Gibson J-50		$5,500	$7,200
1958	Gibson Les Paul Custom	Stoptail	$65,000	$85,000
1952	Gibson Les Paul Model	5/8" knobs, bound neck	$19,000	$25,000
1964	Gibson SG Standard	Cherry, sm guard, dlx vibr or Bigsby	$15,700	$20,600
2004	Gibson SG Supreme		$2,075	$2,700
1902	Gibson Style U-1 Harp Guitar		$6,000	$7,900
1936	Gibson Super 400 (non-cut)	Highly flamed maple	$11,000	$14,200
1988	Gilchrist Model 4 Mandolin		$14,500	$18,700
1973	Gittler Metal Skeleton Guitar		$2,200	$2,900
1988	Givens F-5 (Wheat Straw) Mandolin		$8,400	$10,900
2012	Godin 5th Ave Uptown	Humbuckers	$700	$900
2001	Gretsch Anniversary Reissue Model 6118		$1,550	$2,000
1942	Gretsch Synchromatic 400	Sunburst, 18"	$4,400	$5,800
1973	Gretsch Viking	Sunburst, natural	$2,125	$2,800
1993	Guild Nightbird X-2000		$2,500	$3,300
1964	Guild Polara S-100	2 pickups	$1,975	$2,600
1960	Guild Savoy A-150	Natural	$2,500	$3,300
1963	Hagstrom Coronado IV Bass	Bi-Sonic	$1,075	$1,400
1980	Hagstrom Super Swede	Set-neck	$925	$1,200
1978	Hamer 8-String Short-Scale Bass		$1,850	$2,400
1988	Hamer Californian Custom	USA, various features	$2,100	$2,700
1982	Hamer Cruise 5 Bass		$1,025	$1,325
1979	Hamer Standard	Dimarzio PAF-copies	$7,000	$9,200
1959	Harmony H-22 Bass	1 pickup, 2-on-a-side	$1,200	$1,600
1961	Harmony H-41 Hollywood Double Pickup Model	2 pickups, sunburst	$475	$625
1967	Harmony H72/H72V Double Cutaway Hbody		$1,275	$1,675

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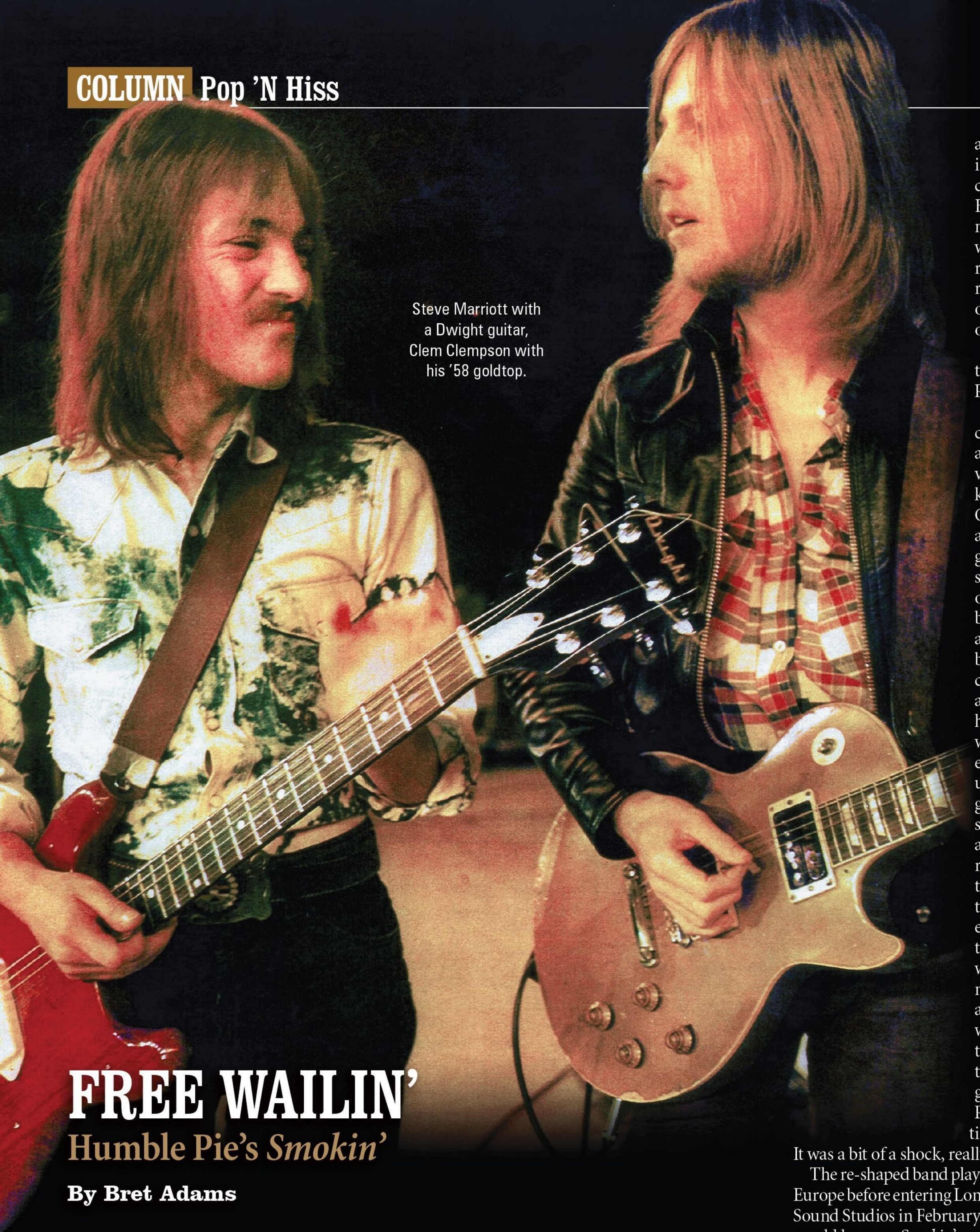
			EXC. COND.	
YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	LOW	HIGH
1996	Heritage Eagle		$2,100	$2,750
1985	Heritage H-150 C/H-150 CM	Goldtop	$1,600	$2,100
1997	Heritage H-170		$1,200	$1,600
1990s	Hofner 62 Model 500/1 Beatle Reissue Bass		$1,675	$2,175
1962	Hofner Model 185 Solid Bass		$875	$1,150
1962	Hofner Model 500/1 Beatle Bass	LH	$4,500	$5,800
1967	Hofner Model 500/1 Beatle Bass	LH	$2,500	$3,250
1962	Hofner Model 500/3 Senator Bass	Single cut thinline, 1 pickup	$1,600	$2,100
1978	Ibanez MC Musician Series Bass		$900	$1,700
1975	Ibanez Model 2383	White or Walnut	$675	$885
1976	Ibanez Model 2460	L-5	$2,200	$2,900
1974	Ibanez Model 2537DX Bass	Hofner-Beatle copy	$625	$825
1978	Ibanez PF200 Custom Performer	Les Paul copy	$625	$800
1992	Ibanez Reb Beach Voyager RBM1		$1,175	$1,525
1979	Ibanez ST980 Studio Bass	8-string	$625	$825
1991	Jackson Fusion (USA)	Graphics	$925	$1,200
1988	Jackson Kelly Custom		$1,700	$2,200
1994	Jackson Kelly Pro Bass		$750	$975
2011	Jackson Phil Collen PC1 (USA)	Upgraded top	$1,600	$2,100
1950	Kay C-1 Concert String Bass		$1,900	$2,500
1965	Kay Solidbody Bass	1 pickup	$375	$500
1987	Kramer Liberty Series	Flame maple body	$850	$1,100
1987	Kramer Eliot Easton Pro I	HSS	$825	$1,075
1968	Kustom Electric Hollowbody Bass	Various models	$1,200	$1,600
2012	Lakland Skyline 44-60 Bass		$1,050	$1,400
1923	Martin 00-18		$6,350	$8,250
1989	Martin B-65 Acoustic Bass		$1,450	$1,875
1955	Martin D-21	Brazilian	$10,000	$13,300
1933	Martin D-28	12-fret, 12 made	$217,000	$289,000
1944	Martin D-28	Scalloped, herringbone	$64,000	$85,000
1992	Martin J12-40		$2,300	$3,000
1986	Martin J-45M Deluxe	17 made, E. Indian rosewood	$3,800	$5,000
1933	Martin OM-18	Standard tuners, large guard, 200 made	$19,700	$26,000
1985	Martin OM-28SO Sing Out 35th	Banjo pegs, 19 made	$340,000	$450,000
2001	Martin OMC-15E	Mahogany, satin, 10 made	$1,100	$1,450
1933	Martin R-18	481 made	$2,200	$2,800
2002	Martin SP000-16		$1,200	$1,550
1835	Martin Stauffer	Fancy, presentation-level, 15 made	$120,000	$158,000
2003	Martin SWD Red Birch	49 made	$1,050	$1,375
1998	Martin SWD Sustainable Wood	267 made	$1,050	$1,375
1954	Marvel Electric Hawaiian Lap Steel		$150	$200
1971	Microfrets Husky Bass		$1,050	$1,350
1967	Morales Electric Solidbody Bass	Various models	$150	$400
1966	Mosrite Ventures Bass	1 pickup	$1,450	$1,875
2003	Music Man Bongo Bass	Bongo 4	$1,125	$1,450
1984	Music Man Sabre Bass	Ernie Ball era	$1,300	$1,700
2010	Music Man StingRay Classic Bass	Made in USA	$1,375	$1,800
1936	National Electric Hawaiian Lap Steel		$675	$875
1962	National Glenwood 99	Snow White	$3,775	$4,900
1955	National Model 1107 Debonaire	1 pickup, elec-arch, dots	$925	$1,200
1955	National Model 1120 New Yorker	1 pickup, blond, elec-arch	$925	$1,200
1947	National N-66 Jumbo		$2,600	$3,400
1968	National N-700 Western Flat Top		$600	$800

YEAR	INSTRUMENT	FEATURES	EXC. COND. LOW	EXC. COND. HIGH
1936	National Style O	Round 14-fret neck, standard or rare etching	$2,500	$5,400
1955	Orpheum Elec. Mandolin Model 730 E		$550	$725
1990s	Ovation Celebrity Series Bass	Various models	$350	$450
1961	PANaramic Electric Hollowbody Bass		$1,050	$1,350
1984	Peavey Foundation Bass		$275	$350
2007	Peavey Liberator JT-84 John Taylor Bass		$1,125	$1,475
1989	Peavey Rudy Sarzo Signature Bass		$575	$750
1980	Pedulla Buzz-4/Buzz-5 Bass		$1,400	$1,800
1995	Pedulla Rapture Series Bass	Rapture 5	$1,275	$1,650
2000	Pedulla Thunderbass Series Bass	6, AAA top	$1,850	$2,400
1987	PRS Curly Bass-4		$2,700	$3,700
1948	Regal Electric Hawaiian Lap Steel		$325	$425
1926	Regal Mandolin	A-style	$365	$475
1934	Regal Model 45		$1,725	$2,250
1966	Rickenbacker Electro ES-16	1 pickup, red, 3/4 student	$1,000	$1,300
1959	Rickenbacker Model 310	Capri, thick body	$10,000	$13,000
2015	Rickenbacker Model 325C64		$2,250	$2,900
1982	Rickenbacker Model 330/12		$2,000	$2,600
2015	Rickenbacker Model 350V63 Liverpool		$2,300	$3,000
1985	Rickenbacker Model 360/12 WB		$3,300	$4,300
1993	Robin Medley Special		$575	$750
1976	Sho-Bud Pro 1 Steel	Square front	$1,925	$2,500
1966	Silvertone Model 1476/1477 Dual Pickup Guitar	Black or sunburst	$525	$700
1968	Silvertone Rebel S1453		$525	$700
1965	Sonata Superior		$475	$0
1966	St. George Elec. Solidbody	4 pickups, trem	$575	$750
1980	Steinberger L1 Bass	Fretless style, black	$2,100	$2,800
1938	Stromberg Master 400	2 braces, Natural, non-cut	$11,000	$21,000
1936	Supertone Lone Ranger		$375	$500
1933	Supertone Robin Hood.		$375	$500
1963	Supro Ozark	Jet Black or Fire Bronze	$1,100	$1,450
1957	Supro Sixty		$775	$1,025
2000	Taylor Model 655		$1,675	$2,200
1993	Taylor Model 710	Spruce top, rosewood	$1,550	$2,000
2001	Taylor Model 810e	Onboard electronics	$1,850	$2,400
1967	Tele-Star Electric model	4 pickups or sparkle	$450	$575
1989	Tobias Classic C-5 Bass		$2,225	$2,900
1909	Vega Whyte Laydie #7 5-String Banjo		$5,700	$7,400
1964	Vox Bobcat	England	$1,200	$1,600
1966	Vox Guitar-Organ	Partially functional with dead spots	$750	$1,000
1966	Vox Guitar-Organ	Functional fretboard, average working condition	$1,500	$2,000
1966	Vox Guitar-Organ	Excellent working condition	$2,500	$3,300
2014	Waterloo WL-14LTR	Solid headstock, ladder braced	$1,450	$1,900
1900	Weymann Larger Models	(most with Brazilian)	$4,000	$6,000
1924	Wurlitzer Mandolin	Various	$460	$600

1968 Gibson
Flying V



Steve Marriott with a Dwight guitar, Clem Clempson with his '58 goldtop.

Marriott and Clempson courtesy of Clem Clempson.

FREE WAILIN'

Humble Pie's *Smokin'*

By Bret Adams

British rockers Humble Pie were steeped in blues and R&B influences that coursed through vocalist/rhythm guitarist Steve Marriott.

When they finally broke with 1971's *Performance: Rockin' the Fillmore*, Marriott, guitarist Peter Frampton, bassist Greg Ridley, and drummer Jerry Shirley were on fire. The nine-minute scorcher "I Don't Need No Doctor" is the highlight from one of rock's best live albums.

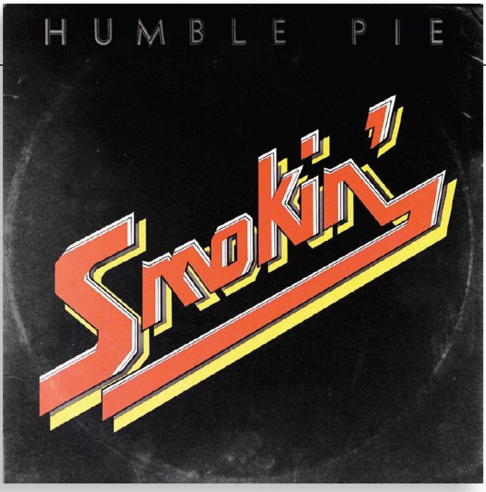
After Frampton suddenly (and shockingly) for a solo career, David "Clem" Clempson was brought aboard after being in several bands including blues-rockers Bakerloo and, more notably, Colosseum, which blended jazz-rock and progressive rock (he is now part of a reunited version of that band).

Clempson recalls that joining Humble Pie was a surprise.

"Our paths had crossed, but I didn't really know any of them very well," he said. "I knew Peter had left and Colosseum was falling apart, so I decided to give Steve a call and see what was going on. He then went and bought *Colosseum Live* and was very excited by what he heard. He called me later and asked if I could go to his cottage in Essex, where we had a nice evening jamming on unplugged electric guitars. He also played some records he liked and said, 'Come to our rehearsal in London tomorrow and meet the guys.' I turned up expecting an audition, and the press was there! Apparently, me joining had been announced, or at least word had been passed to certain friends in the press that the new guitarist in Humble Pie was going to be putting in an appearance. It was a bit of a shock, really."

The re-shaped band played warm-up shows in Europe before entering London's famed Olympic Sound Studios in February, 1972, to record what would become *Smokin'*.

"We'd played some of those songs at those first gigs," said Clempson. "I remember doing 'The Fixer' and 'Sweet Peace and Time' in particular. We definitely *didn't* do 'Hot 'N' Nasty' because that was a jam in the studio – a completely spontaneous thing, not written and rehearsed."



The album became their biggest seller, reaching #6 on the *Billboard* chart; "Hot 'N' Nasty" became a modest hit (#52) and "30 Days in the Hole" proved to be a rock-radio favorite.

With its loose feel and covers, *Smokin'* was full of songs the band had loved for years.

"'I Wonder' was obviously one," Clempson noted. "We were all huge fans of Ray Charles. To be honest, I hadn't heard (Charles' version) when Steve said, 'This is one we could do.' There was another – (Junior Walker & the All Stars') 'Road Runner' – which was a jam in the studio and Steve sang the words over it, so we called it 'Road Runner's 'G' Jam.' Eddie Cochran's 'C'mon Everybody' was another one we'd been doing before we went into the studio."

The sessions were straightforward. Clempson and Alexis Korner, legendary father figure of British blues, sang "Old Time Feelin'" while Korner played a Martin tiple. Stephen Stills, who also happened to be recording at Olympic, added backing vocals to "Hot 'N' Nasty."

"We just played as if we were onstage," said Clempson. "Vocals were usually overdubbed, of course. I may have re-done one or two solos. Mostly, it was us playing live and having a great time. It was the most-fun album I've ever done, and I've had great times with a lot of different musicians. But in terms of fun, nothing ever beat that one.

"Another thing was that wonderful feeling – especially in the *Smokin'* sessions – that I was just so *free* coming from Colosseum, where we were confined by complicated arrangements. Suddenly, I could wail – and that's exactly what I did through that whole album!"

Clempson primarily played a '58 Les Paul goldtop (which he still has) and a Martin D-28. He might've used a different Gibson more, had the British government not intervened.

"I played a white SG Custom, which a guitar dealer brought from America. He turned up at the studio with a bunch of guitars. I bought one, and Steve bought one. I can't remember what Steve bought, but we used them for two or three days in the studio before Her Majesty's customs turned up and said the guitars had been smuggled into the country. They arrested the guy because hadn't paid duty on them, so they took them.

"Anyway, I used the SG on 'Hot 'N' Nasty' and 'Road Runner's 'G' Jam,' which were recorded the same evening, with Steve on organ.

"To be honest, I don't think I would've kept that guitar for long because the middle pickup drove me crazy. I've never really got on with three-pickup guitars [because the middle pickup interferes with picking]. I don't mind Strats because they have lots of space between since they're only single-coils. But when you've got three humbuckers next to each other, there's no space." **VG**

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Jimi Hendrix rips on a custom-color Strat in 1967. Monk Montgomery displays the form Leo Fender intended when players grabbed a Precision Bass. Dominick Trupia's Galliano (below).

JIMI FLIP

Plus, Precision Bass rests and an odd Galliano

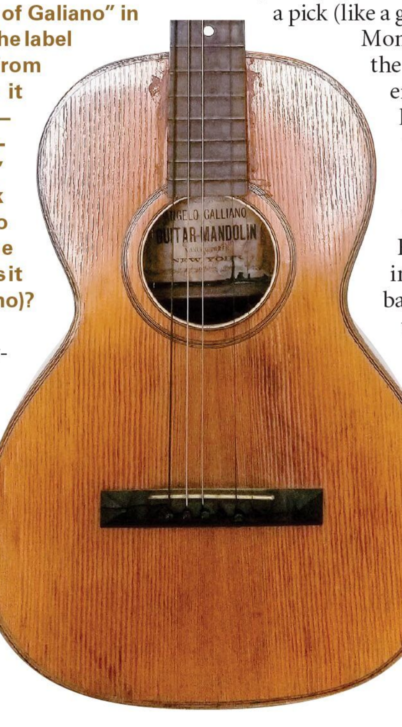
I've never read why Jimi Hendrix played and set up a right-hand Strat to play left-handed. Surely, he could've found a lefty model. Does anybody know? – *Garry Curry*

The easy answer is that like a lot of lefties, Jimi learned on a right-handed guitar because that's all he had as a kid. But it goes deeper. Albert King, Otis Rush, and Doyle Bramhall, II learned on a right-handed guitar that they simply flipped upside-down and left strung with the low E at the bottom. Hendrix, though, re-strung his to be correct – low E on top.

He later could have bought (or been given) all the lefty guitars he wanted, but his philosophy was that since guitar companies made hundreds of right-handed guitars for every one lefty, they were likely better at making righty guitars. We can't know if that holds water, but it's what he said.

Even when Fender supposedly sent him lefty guitars (suspicious items that turned up at auctions years ago without much provenance), he didn't use them. And, he even played re-strung righty versions of symmetrical guitars like Flying Vs and SGs. In fact, the 12-string Zemaitis acoustic he played on "Hear My Train a-Comin'" for *A Film About Jimi Hendrix* was a right-handed model flipped over and re-strung. – ***Dan Forte***

I started playing guitar more than 60 years ago, using my father's 15" Galiano; he immigrated to New Jersey around 1910 and purchased it thereafter. I've been especially curious about its origin since reading Peter Kohman's "Neapolitan New York Enigma: The Mystique of Galiano" in the October '19 issue. The label in mine is different from those Peter describes; it says "Angelo Galliano – Guitar Mandolin – Manufacturer New York." Also, stamped in red ink is "Signature – Angelo Galliano" – the last name spelled differently. So, is it a true Galliano (or Galiano)? – *Dominick Trupia*



It's difficult to determine with certainty without an in-hand inspection, but your Galiano looks similar to many other 1900-1920s flat-tops we've seen labeled with that brand, and appears to be earlier than most. It may have possibly been made in the Oscar Schmidt factory for resale under that brand, or hand-made in Little Italy. The "blacked" neck is more commonly seen on 19th-century instruments, but may have persisted into the 20th. The body is artfully grained in faux rosewood, very well done. I have not seen that exact label before; the addition of "Angelo" is also new to me, as is the rubber-stamped signature. This is likely a very early use of the Galliano brand and was possibly sold through Angelo Mannello's operation, one of the first big Italian-American firms operating in New York City from the 1890s. He died in 1922, and is mostly known now as a mandolin builder.

The mechanics of how the Galiano trade name came to be used by multiple builders/sellers seems lost to history. Still, yours is an interesting guitar, historically. – ***Peter Stuart Kohman***

Why are the thumbrests on some vintage basses *under*, not above, the strings, like on the Vox Symphonic (*VG*, November '22). This placement seems useless for right-handed players. – *Peter Wojtiuk*

That rest is intended for how Leo Fender envisioned people playing the electric bass – remember, he had no one to copy!

The original Precision was designed for the player to rest their palm on the center pickup cover and play with the thumb while gripping the "tug bar" with their fingers. In practice, very few players used it that way, as most either plucked with fingers (like an upright) or used a pick (like a guitar).

Monk Montgomery – one of the first "name" Fender players – did play that way for a long time and defended the thumb technique in interviews into the '70s! Other makers (like Gibson and Vox) were simply copying Fender, presumably assuming that since Leo ruled the bass market, he knew what he was doing. – ***Peter Stuart Kohman***

This column addresses questions about guitar-related subjects, ranging from songs, albums, and musicians to the minutiae of instrument builds, manufacturers, and the collectible market. Questions can be sent to ward@vintageguitar.com with "VG Q&A" in the subject line.

Monk Montgomery: Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

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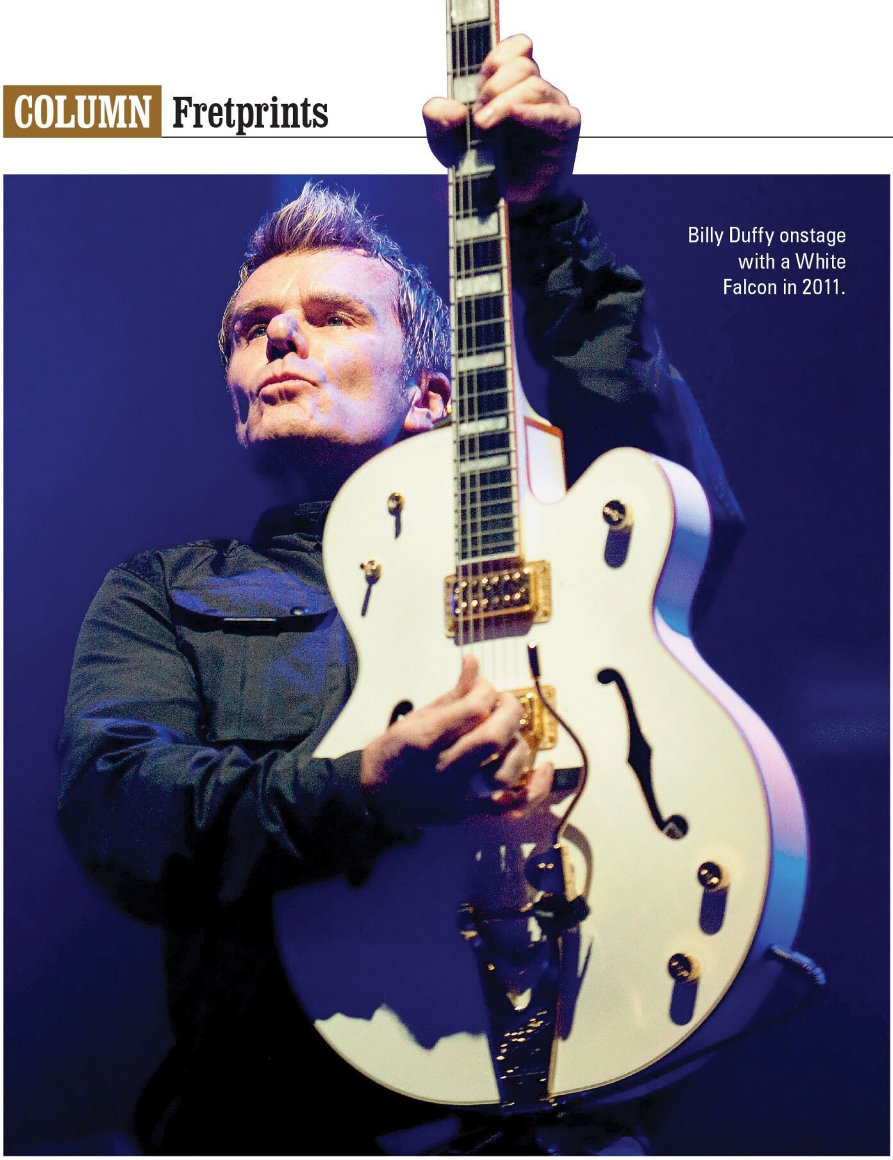

Billy Duffy onstage with a White Falcon in 2011.

BILLY DUFFY

Personality of The Cult

By Wolf Marshall

Co-founder of The Cult, Billy Duffy was Britain's last '80s guitar hero, with an attitude and sound that embodied the essence of rock guitar. While lauded, that X factor was misunderstood by critics.

Historically, Duffy bridged gaps between hard rock, melodic metal, punk, and alternative in an era fraught with conformity by adhering to the audacious mindset and swagger of rock, in the process giving music a much-needed kick in the bum.

William Henry Duffy, born in Manchester, England, on May 12, 1961, began playing guitar at 15 and was bred on hard rock and glam before gravitating to punk in '76. He played with local punk band The Nosebleeds, which also included Steven Morrissey, in the process inspiring neighborhood guitarist Johnny Marr to pursue greater aspirations and encouraging Morrissey to become a frontman. Morrissey and Marr subsequently realized their goals in The Smiths.

Duffy moved to London in '79 and immersed himself in its alternative scene while joining Theater of Hate. He met vocalist and future songwriting partner Ian Astbury when Astbury's band, Southern Death Cult, preceded Hate at a gig. They became a musical team and by '83, as co-leaders of the abbreviated Death Cult, and finally, The Cult, built a following on post-punk/goth-rock circuits and recorded an EP, *Death Cult*. *Dreamtime*, their debut album, was released on Beggars Banquet in August '84. Laced with psychedelia, Duffy's textural processed guitar parts (drawing favorable comparisons to U2 and Big Country) and references to mythology and shamanism, the record reached #21 in England and sported the single "Spiritwalker," which hit #1 on the indie charts. Their power-rock sound and ostentatious guitar solos were at odds with alternative-inclined critics and peers but created momentum toward *Love* (1985), a breakthrough album produced by Steve Brown that reached #15 in the U.K. Despite subliminal goth elements and Duffy's vestigial jangle-pop tones, *Love* made no pretensions about being anything other than a guitar-dominated rock effort. Viewed as anachronistic by the British music press, it nonetheless was a commercial success and trumpeted Cult's evolving sound with the popular singles "She Sells Sanctuary," "Rain," and "Revolution," and fan favorites "Love" and "Phoenix."

Electric (1987) continued their ascent and cemented inclusion in the '80s classic-rock renaissance. Sessions that started in England with Brown proved unsatisfying and Duffy and Astbury found more sympathetic ears with Rick Rubin, an American producer known for rap and hip-hop but relatively inexperienced with live drums and rock guitar. Enamored of Aerosmith, Led Zeppelin, and AC/DC, Rubin found common cause with The Cult's increasing heaviness and primal rhythms; opting for a straightforward sound with less coloration completed their shift to hard rock. They also shifted to a classic British quartet a la Zep and The Who (albeit with rotating bass/drums sidemen) and arena stars with landmark pieces like "Love Removal Machine," "Lil' Devil," "Wild Flower" and remake of "Born to Be Wild." The aptly-titled album hit #4, spending 27 weeks on U.K. charts, and cracked the U.S. Top 40.

Sonic Temple ('89) enlisted the production services of Bob Rock and proved to be their masterpiece, the realization of Duffy's aim to "capture the essence of what a power chord felt like," depicted boldly with the cover's emblematic guitar-hero stance.

A balanced opus combining punk sensibilities and classic-rock intentions with improved sonics and heavier timbres spread across the stereo spectrum, it epitomizes how a Les Paul could be used, with only hints of Duffy's

Billy Duffy: Christophe Ketels/Alamy.

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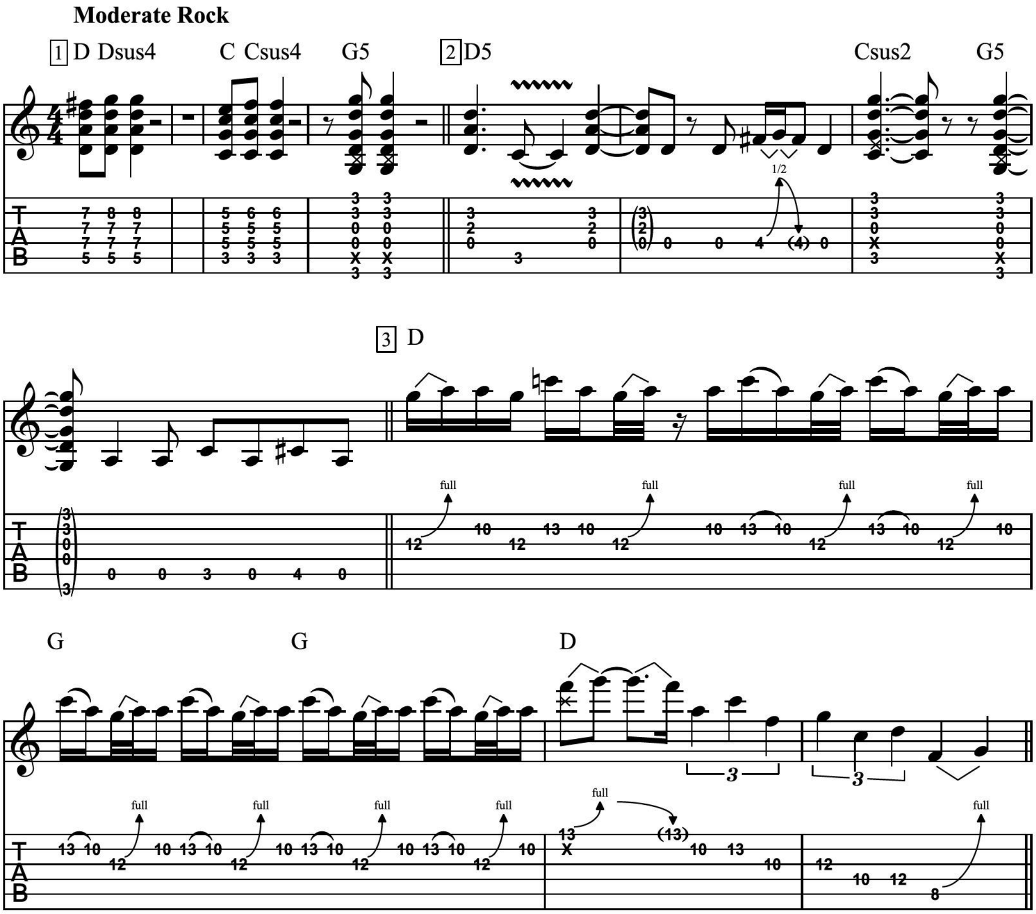
previous signal processing. The album rankled critics but propelled the band into mainstream rock circles, yielding a string of hits, selling more than 1.5 million copies in the U.S., cracking *Billboard*'s Top 10, and reaching #3 in England, all while sidestepping hair-band formulas and misogynistic cliches in songs like "Sun King," "Fire Woman," "Edie (Ciao Baby)" and "Sweet Soul Sister."

Ceremony ('91), produced by Richie Zito, reflected tensions between Duffy and Astbury and portended The Cult's waning popularity, exacerbated by the arrival of grunge and a lawsuit over cover art delaying release. Nevertheless, it garnered Gold status in America, with Astbury's story lines revisiting the Native-American mythos of *Dreamtime* while Duffy's guitar bombast and diversity were reprised on "Hearted Son," "If," "Heart Full of Soul," "Sweet Salvation" and "Ceremony."

The Cult ('94) reinstated Rock as producer and made greater use of sonic diversity, terraced dynamics and light/dark shades. The juxtaposing of hard-rock timbres with retro and acoustic sounds reinforced the Zep connection, emphasized by the acoustic-driven "Sacred Life," layering in "Saints Are Down," uncommon instrumentation, wah, and fuzz in "Gone," and heavy riffing of "Be Free." The album reached #69 in the U.S. and #21 in Britain, prompting Duffy and Astbury to disband in '95. With varying personnel backing, Duffy and Astbury reunited for a run (1999-2002), toured, and released three albums spaced several years apart ('07, '12, '16), and returned with *Under the Midnight Sun* in 2022.



Duffy is a formidable arranger. These excerpts from "Love Removal Machine" (*Electric*) present three aspects of his guitar-layering approach. 1) The main riff played in verses is a tight rhythm figure made of triad-based voicings and sus4 suspensions on D and C. G5 is rendered as a larger power-chord sonority exploiting open strings. Note the effective use of space (rests) throughout. 2) The chorus riff conveys a lead/rhythm approach with his mixture of first-position open chords and lower-register single-note melody. Check out Duffy's emblematic Csus2 in the phrase. 3) His lead solo is filled with definitive Duffy elements. This sample features a cycling ostinato pattern of repeated blues-rock bends and pentatonic melody contrasted by a languorous tortured bend and a zigzagging intervallic line in D minor pentatonic that twists his blues content into a modernistic shape.

INFLUENCES

Duffy enjoys numerous influences. His playlist includes The Who, Mott the Hoople, Status Quo, Sweet, Slade, Thin Lizzy, Alice Cooper, David Bowie, Be Bop Deluxe, Roxy Music, Led Zep, Queen, AC/DC, Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Damned, New York Dolls, Montrose, and guitarists who "weren't so obvious" including Mick Ralphs, Mick Ronson, Bill Nelson, Paul Kossoff, Johnny Thunders, Steve Jones, and James Williamson.

STYLE

In the age of high-gain noodling, two-hand-tapping, and neoclassic shred, Duffy stood as a proud emissary of classic rock. His riffs and power chording are definitive nods to the genre, while his lead lines reshaped the stylistic DNA of Chuck Berry, Jimmy Page, and Angus Young. Consider the relentless wah assault of "Phoenix" (*Love*) reminiscent of Clapton's live-Cream solos in "White Room" and "Brave Ulysses." Or the AC/DC-inspired rhythmic pocket of "Wild Flower" and dynamic Zep-like riffs of "Automatic Blues." The Cult was a riff-driven band since its earliest post-punk incarnations, but Duffy's transcendent thrashing was guided by his credo that a riff must function within the song's context and took many forms, like the ethnically-tinged theme of "American Heroes." Self-evident are the driving rhythm phrases and punchy bass-register figures in the repertoire, but what about his strong melodic hooks played over intros, verses and choruses

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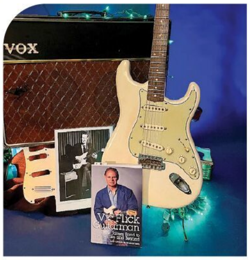

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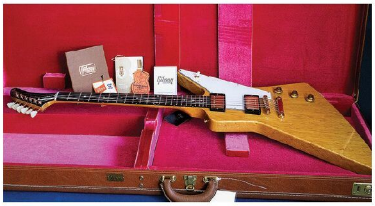
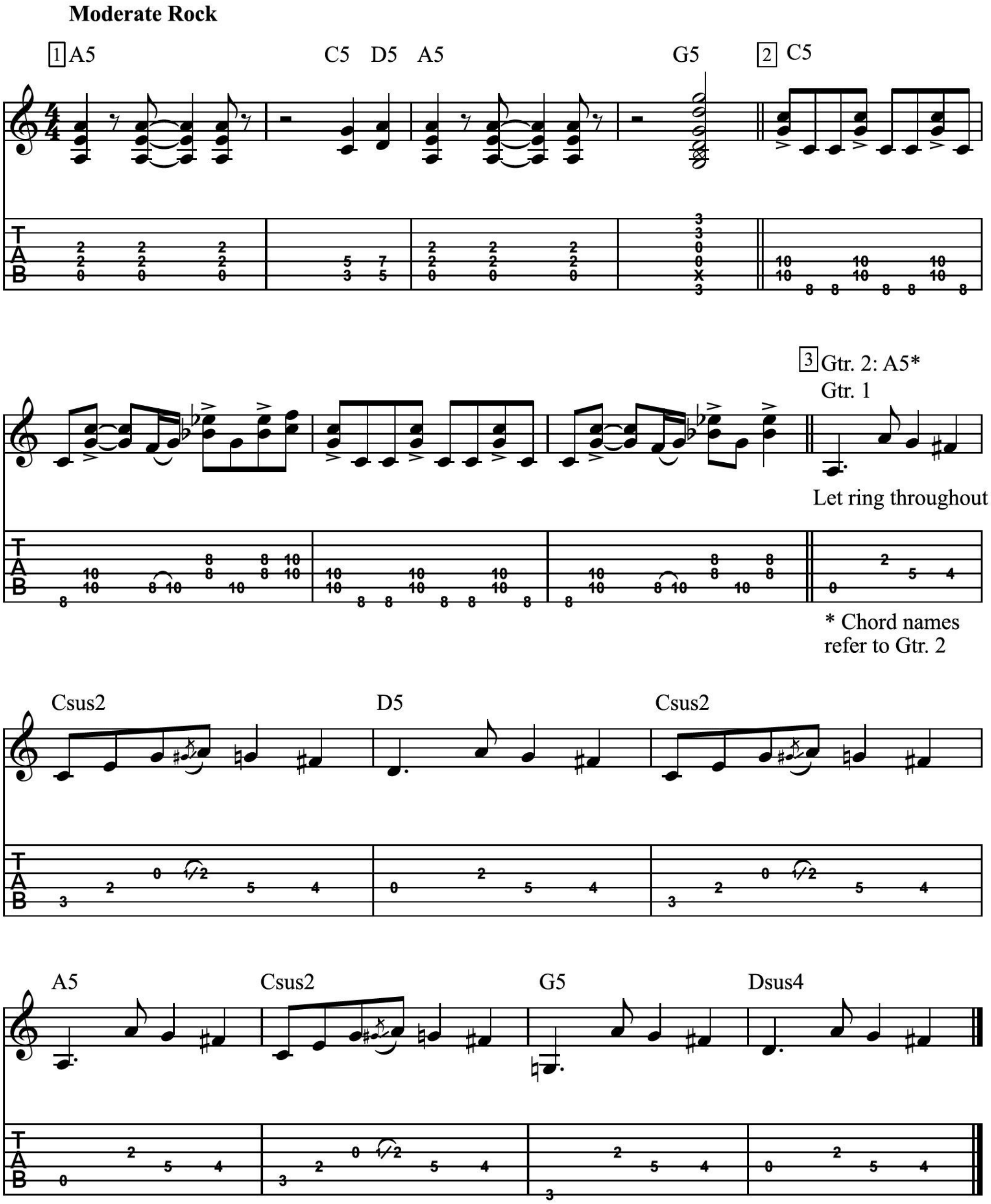


It's not you I want. It's the guitar.

of songs like "Rain" and "Fire Woman"? Solid rhythm playing is a cornerstone of Duffy's style extant in power chording, decorative (often droning) chordal arpeggiations, and single-note theme riffs – each representing a central facet of his ensemble work. He often expands root-5th power chords with colorful suspended or add2 voicings, as in "Sun King," "Fire Woman" and "Love Removal Machine." An evolving player, by *Electric*, Duffy had moved past his punk/goth influences to exploit the ethos of AC/DC, Free and Zep, eschewing the processed texturalism of *Love* in favor of leaner, drier hard-rock tones.

As a soloist, he is blues-based like rockers Page or Kossoff rather than a scholarly disciple of B.B. King or Buddy Guy. His solos incorporate requisite pentatonic cliches and idiomatic string bending of blues guitar, but convey an alternative attitude informed by punk and hard rock underscored by his aggressive attack, pinch harmonics, and whammy-bar dips and dives. He modifies his pentatonic mannerisms with extensions (typically adding tones from the Dorian mode), chromatic passing tones, and diatonic scalar content, all present in his "Sun King" solo. Many solos harness purposeful repetition as ostinato patterns ("Love Removal Machine") and cycling double-stops, a tactic synonymous with rock improvisation.

Reflecting a period of deliberate practicing, Duffy's lead work on *Sonic Temple* flaunted L.A.-honed technical advances, faster runs, expanded whammy-bar zaniness, and more-conspicuous metal harmonics mingled with blues-rock staples.



"Sun King" is the powerful opening track on *Sonic Temple*. A masterful example of Duffy's riffmaking in song context, it embodies his strategy of harnessing guitar parts to build a rock arrangement with forward motion to the chorus. 1) The verse figure is made of simple power chords and emphasizes syncopation and space. 2) The pre-chorus shifts gears with a driving hard-rock pattern of power chords broken into dyads posed above bass notes in steady eighth rhythm. 3) The chorus riff is a contrasting jangley affair with more-animated sustained arpeggiations and thematic melody lines woven into a textural phrase.

Onstage, he prefers to be sole guitarist, but in the studio regularly multi-tracks parts to produce his trademark wall of sound and develop orchestrations, which necessitated adding a rhythm-guitar sideman on some tours. Saturated distortion and high volume versus clean electric and lighter acoustic colors are shades he alternates consistently and thoughtfully. Case in point is the web of harmonized melody guitars, overdriven

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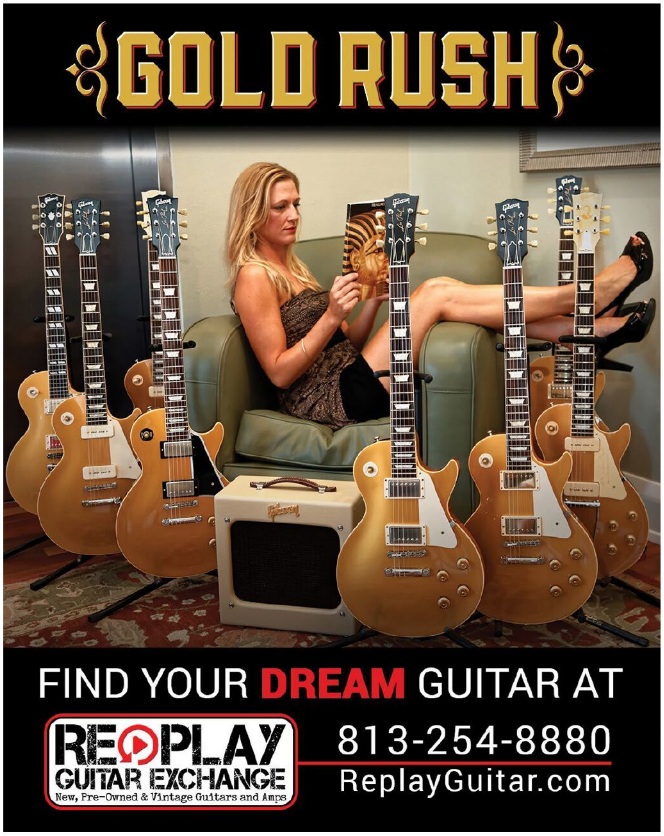

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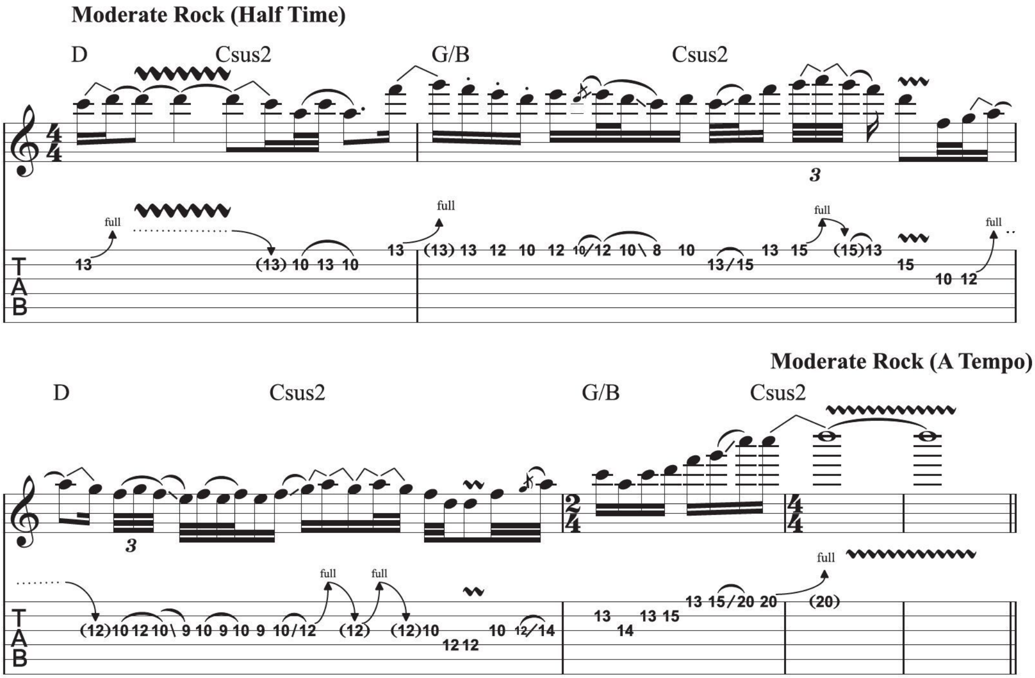
rhythm guitars, chorused lead soloing, and acoustic timbres in "Edie (Ciao Baby)," woven into a driving rock arrangement containing string parts. Also notable is his layering of three processed guitar voices in "Fire Woman": electric arpeggiation (with slap-back echo) in the intro, 12-string chording (with modulation and delay) and slide guitar (with echo effects).

Effects play a substantial role in Duffy's style. The intro to "She Sells Sanctuary" is a definitive early example with its background sci-fi soundscape featuring a heavily processed orchestration created with opulent distortion and modulation/delay effects over which he plays a chiming arpeggiated theme colored with delay and modulation.

ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Sonic Temple, *Electric*, and *Love* are undisputed Cult classics of the '80s. *Pure Cult* is a serviceable collection while *Rare Cult* provides a deeper dive.



"Fire Woman" contains one of Duffy's most emotional and memorable solos, and was a highlight of the *Sonic Temple* sessions. This example, played over a half-time change in feel, demonstrates technical advances permeating his lead work on the album. Notice the faster, more-complex passages incorporating the hexatonic sound (E added to expand D minor pentatonic) as well as variations in phrasing: blues-rock strandedness and vibrato, slippery legato lines contrasted by choppy staccato articulation, and extensive slurring on a single string. The transition from 2/4 to 4/4 meter and return to tempo are emphasized with a quick flurry into the highest register, producing a dramatic climax to the solo.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING

Cult fans will want to compare two live versions (MTV awards '89 and Milwaukee '22) of "Fire Woman" online. Also recommended are *Live at the Ritz* ('85), *Live on BBC* ('87) and Duffy's 2014 Sweetwater interview.

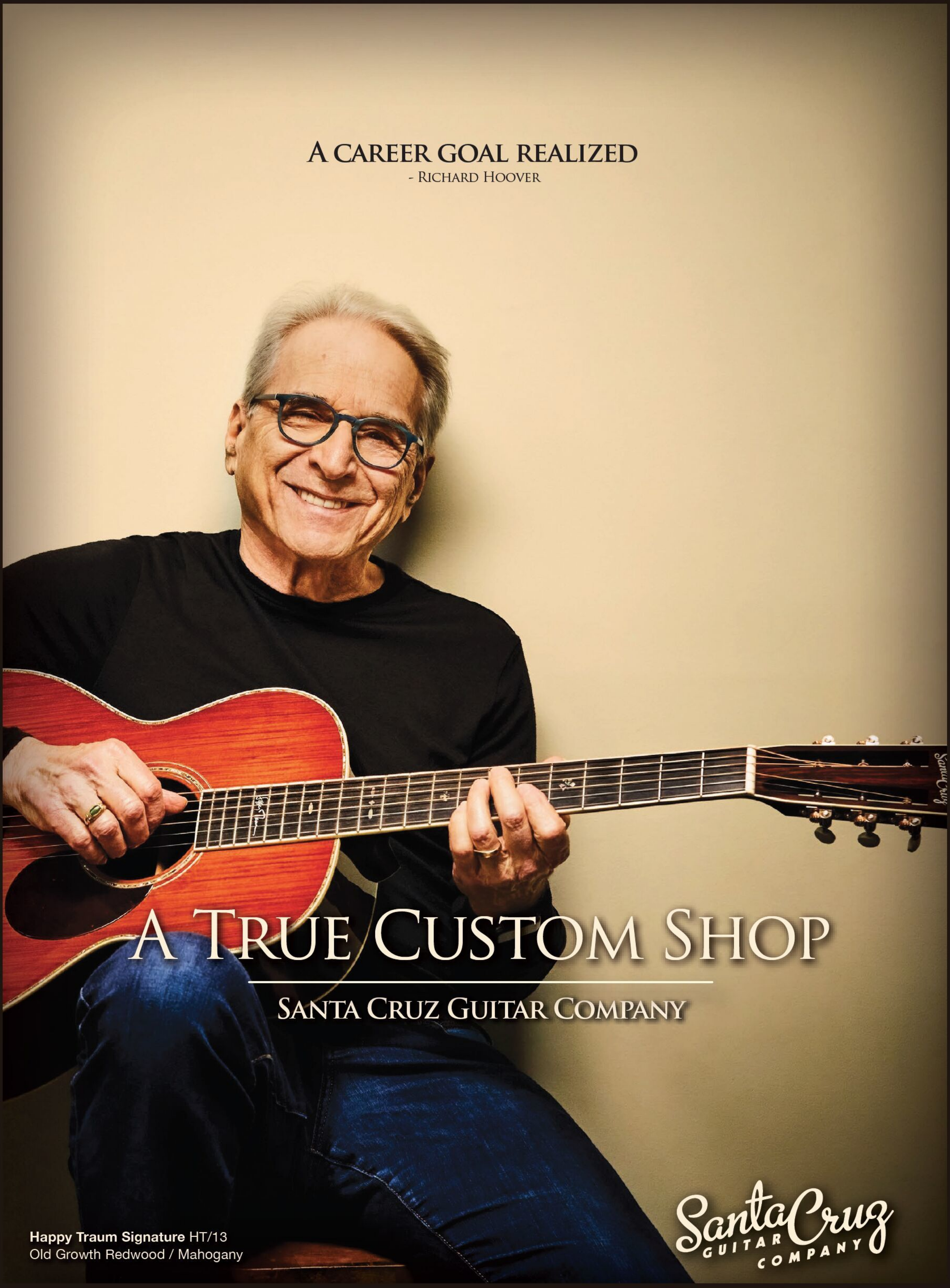
SOUND

Duffy adopted and exploited a hollowbody Gretsch with Bigsby tailpiece as a hard-rock instrument on The Cult's early albums, when his sound emanated from a '75 White Falcon acquired in '81. He stuffed its body with cloth or foam, taped the sound holes from inside to reduce feedback, and pinned the floating bridge. By '89, he favored Gibson Les Paul Customs (some with Floyd Rose vibrato systems) fitted with Duncan Jeff Beck pickups. His primary instrument was a stripped-finish '78. More recently, he has preferred a black Les Paul Custom, reissues of a '58 Standard, TV Junior, and '57 goldtop, silver-sparkle Gretsch White Falcon and Black Falcon G7593T Duffy signature models, or Stephen Stern-built copies of his "Sanctuary" Falcon, all strung with Ernie Ball .011-.048 Power Slinkys. His recording guitars include an early-'60s Strat for clean tones, Nash relic Esquires, a Performance Guitar "Stonehenge model" superstrat for alternate lead sounds, and Gibson J-200 and Guild F-412 acoustics.

Duffy has used a variety of amps. Early on, Marshalls were the norm for distorted tones while cleans ("Fire Woman") came from a Roland JC-120. On *The Cult*, he employed gems from Rock's collection – a Gibson Skylark, Fender Champ, tweed Bassman, Matchless DC-30, Peavey 5150, and modified Marshall JCM 800s. In 2015, he played a Marshall 1973X combo in the studio, and onstage incorporated a Chinese-built Vox AC30 along with his JC-120 (miked for stereo chorusing) and favored Friedman heads with Marshall slant cabs.

An exponent of effects pedals (analog and digital), Duffy employed Boss and MXR delay/phasing/modulation stompboxes and Crybaby wah during *Dreamtime*, *Love*, and *Electric*. After *Sonic Temple*, he consolidated effects in a Bradshaw system, using only a Boss Super Overdrive, Crybaby and Morley wahs (the second as an EQ/filter) and other processors for clean/dirty amp signal paths with a MIDI switcher. His distortion came from a Harry Colby-modded 100-watt Marshall head and 4x12 cab while his clean path utilized a stock Marshall head and 4x12 into racked units – two Korg 2000 delays, two Yamaha SPX90s, TC chorus, Boss Flanger, MXR Phase 100, and 400-watt H&H power amp driving four cabinets in stereo. In '94, he experimented with vintage Vox wahs and Fuzz Face (prominent on "Gone"), and in the 2000s reverted to a simpler pedalboard with Boss stompboxes, Dunlop Duffy Cry Baby wah with 10db boost, Uchida treble booster, Ibanez Tube Screamer and Kalamazoo overdrives, and a Tripler amp selector.

Wolf Marshall is the founder and original editor-in-chief of *GuitarOne* magazine. A respected author and columnist, he has been influential in contemporary music education since the early 1980s. His books include *101 Must-Know Rock Licks*, *B.B. King: the Definitive Collection*, and *Best of Jazz Guitar*, and a list credits can be found at wolfmarshall.com.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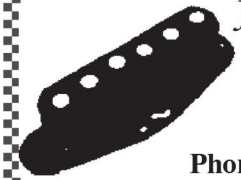

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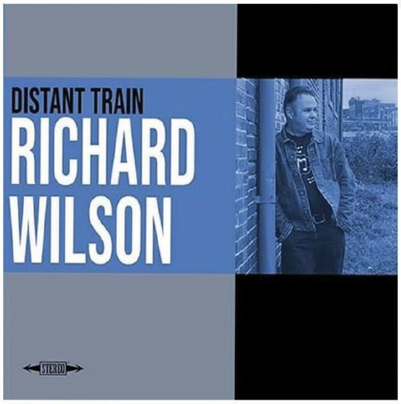
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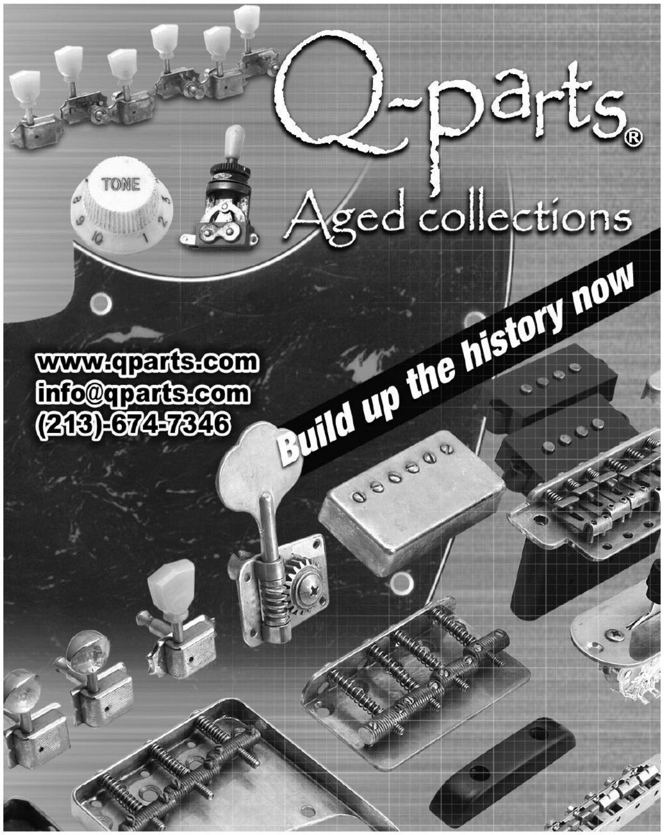

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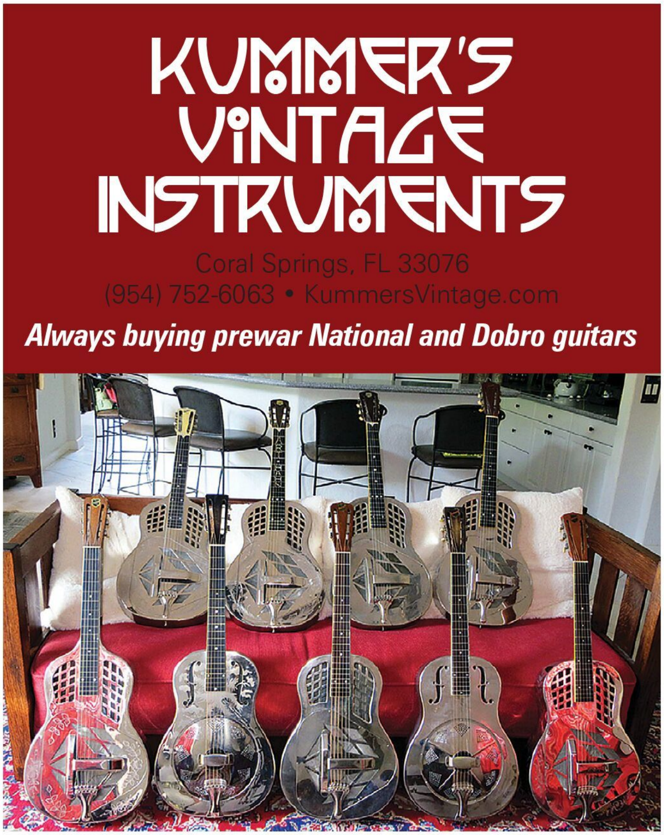

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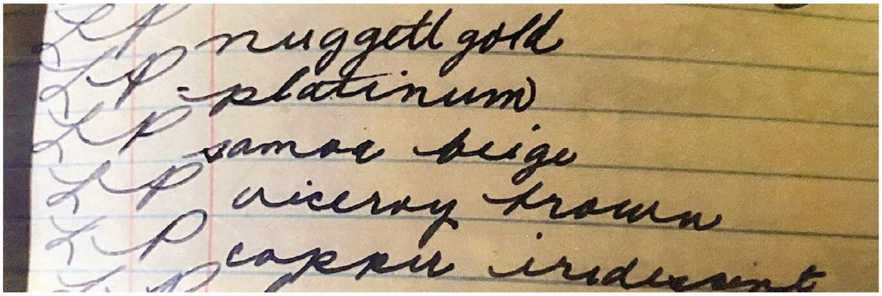
GIBSON'S COPPER IRIDESCENT LES PAULS

BY WARD MEEKER

PHOTOS BY RICK GOULD

Like large celestial bodies, some guitar collectors have a gravity that draws objects to them. In 2016, rare custom-color Les Pauls began entering Joe Bonamassa's orbit.

Brought to Gruhn Guitars, an oddball brown Les Paul consigned by its owner in Minnesota caught the attention of a web-surfing Bonamassa. More fascinated than interested, he sent a link to his friend, Mat Koehler, guitarist/collector and Senior Director of Product Development at Gibson Guitars' Nashville headquarters.



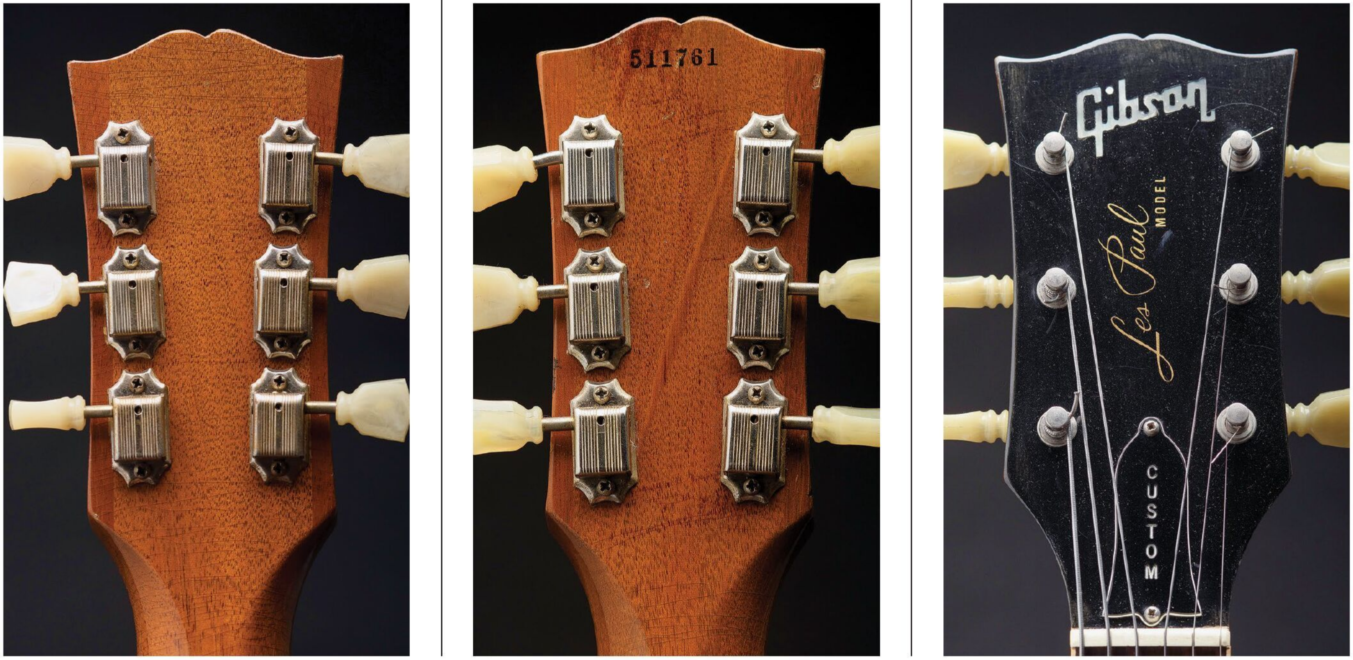
LP nuggett gold
LP platinum
LP samoa beige
LP viceroy brown
LP copper iridescent

Mysterious shades in Gibson's 1955 shipping ledger.

"Joe asked if I thought it was real, and at a glance I figured there was no reason to doubt it, especially since the knobs were painted to match the finish," Koehler said. "I'm never fully confident judging only by photos, but the asking price seemed low for a custom guitar. I figured that even if it was a refinish, it was a *cool* refinish."

The curio was soon on its way to Bonamassa's Nerdville headquarters in Los Angeles.

"At first glance on the website, of course, I was thinking it was a refin," Bonamassa



The first '55 to emerge had no serial number while the second did. Truss-cover engraving on the '72 hints at its status.

recalled. "But once I had it in my hands, there was no doubt it's original."

Fast-forward one year. Gibson archives curator Jason Davidson is scanning shipping ledgers on behalf of Cheap Trick guitarist Rick Nielsen, when, in the 1955 book he stumbles upon consecutive entries in unusual penmanship, with no serial numbers and listing colors he had never heard about – Nugget Gold, Platinum, Samoan Beige, Viceroy Brown, and Copper Iridescent. Wondering if they might have a connection to Bonamassa's brown guitar, Davidson fired off a note to Koehler.

"When I saw that, I started researching the color names," Koehler said. "Gibson was using Duco and DuPont car paints in the '50s, and Rick Gould, a friend of Joe's who's very into vintage instruments, went online and matched some to Cadillac and Chevy colors."

Old color charts are part of the game for guitar collectors, but none of these had been seen on a guitar.

"I recognized Viceroy Brown as a sunburst finish from the 1960s," said Koehler. "But it appears to have been an opaque walnut-brown, according to '50s car-manufacturer paint chips."

His informed speculation was that Gibson had sprayed experimental finishes on five instruments bound for the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) show, which would help explain their oddball ledger entries.

A new chapter in the mystery opened in 2018. Koehler was surfing the web one day when up popped an ad for a "1970s Les Paul Deluxe in Custom Brown." Judging by the small photos, he thought it *could* be the same color as Bonamassa's '55. The seller listed little info, but the guitar looked to be in very good condition, its embossed pickup covers signaling it was from '72. And like on the '55, the knobs were painted.

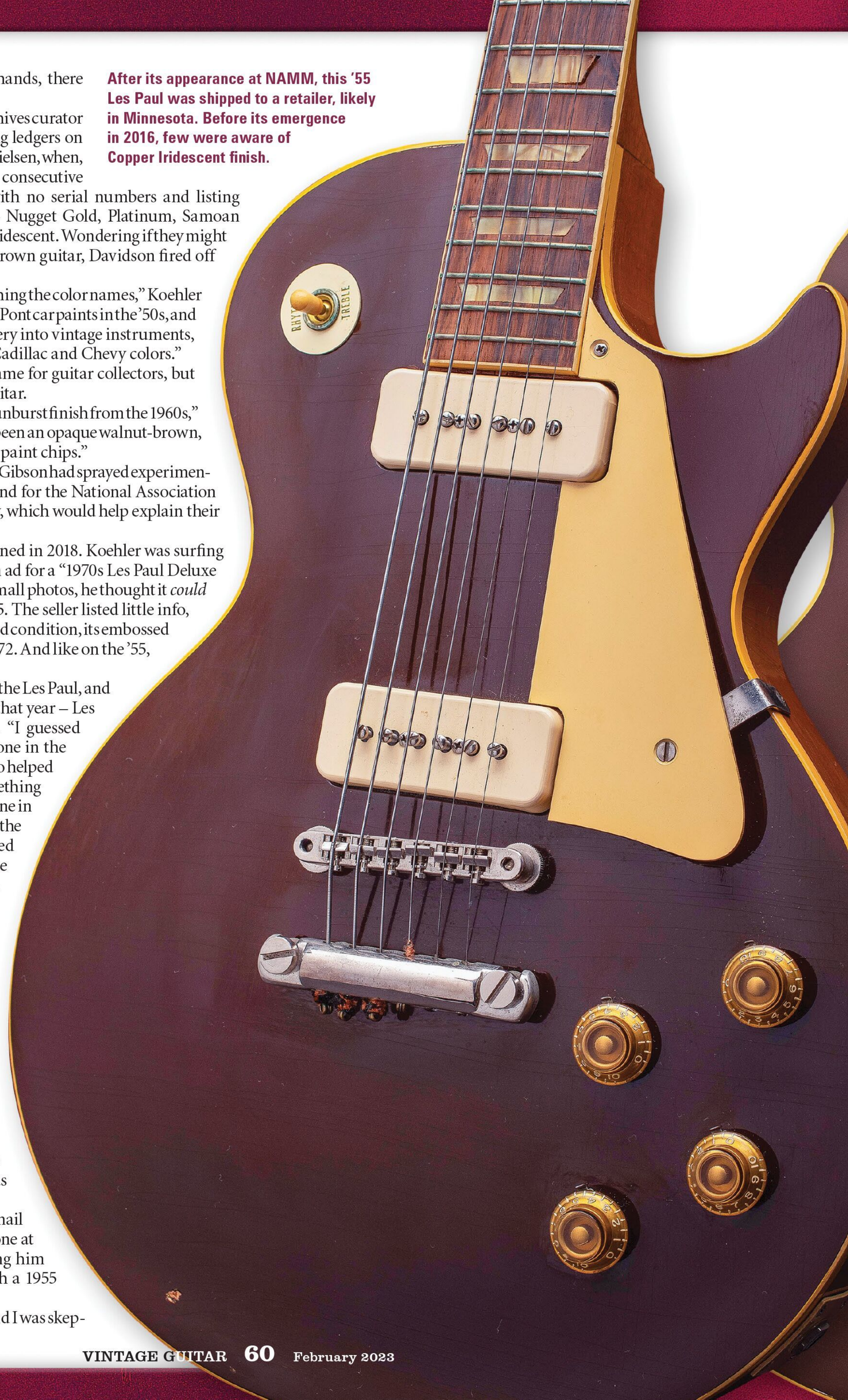
"That was the 20th anniversary of the Les Paul, and Gibson did all sorts of special runs that year – Les Pauls, in particular," Koehler said. "I guessed it was a nod to something they'd done in the past – maybe the same employee who helped create the brown '50s guitars had something to do with this one. Or maybe someone in sales ordered it, perhaps as a tribute to the late Clarence Havega, who was beloved at Gibson and would've shown those first brown guitars at NAMM in 55.

"Sales guys dictated more product changes and one-offs than people realize, including with neck profiles and fretboard widths. There *were* changes driven outside of sales, but most of the major ones in the '50s and '60s came from the sales team."

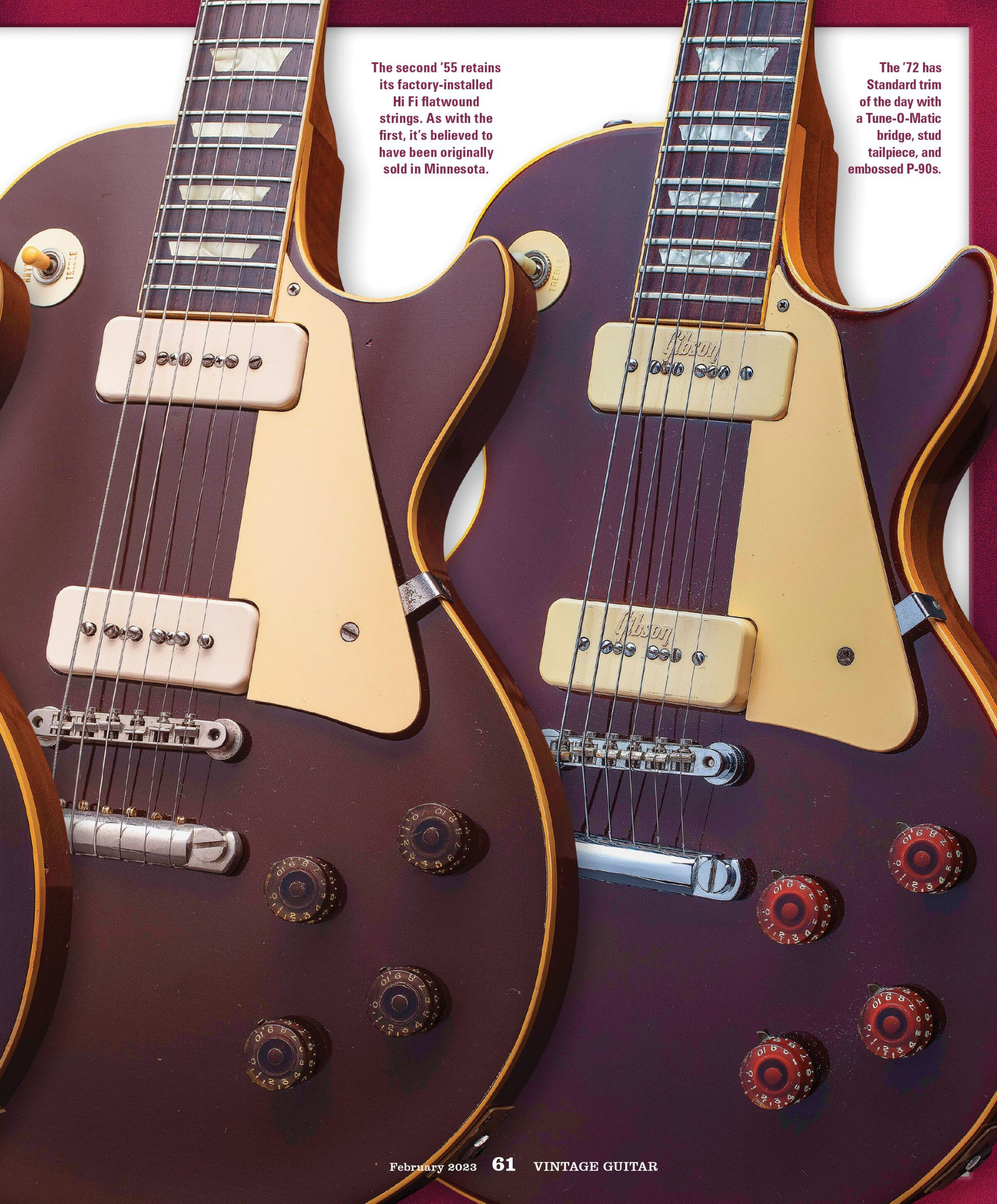
Anyway, as with the first brown guitar, the asking price for the '72 was reasonable and posed little risk even if it wasn't exactly as advertised. Besides, Koehler reasoned, if anything in the world belonged at Nerdville, it's a *pair* of funky Les Pauls. For the next few years, all was right in guitardom.

Then, in 2021 Bonamassa got an e-mail from his friends Jay and Trevor Boone at Emerald City Guitars, Seattle, telling him they'd found a brown Les Paul with a 1955 serial number in Yuma, Arizona.

"Joe told me about it right away, and I was skep-



After its appearance at NAMM, this '55 Les Paul was shipped to a retailer, likely in Minnesota. Before its emergence in 2016, few were aware of Copper Iridescent finish.



The second '55 retains its factory-installed Hi Fi flatwound strings. As with the first, it's believed to have been originally sold in Minnesota.

The '72 has Standard trim of the day with a Tune-O-Matic bridge, stud tailpiece, and embossed P-90s.

tical, because what are the chances?" Koehler said. "It was just strange that we found those entries listing these bizarre special orders... then they start to appear? But we went back to the ledger and there it was – 'Special order, Copper, Hi Fi strings.' I thought, 'How much more provenance do you need?' The whole thing was just too cool."

Bonamassa certainly won't argue.

"I would've thought a guitar made for a trade show was a unicorn," he said. "But of course it was thrilling when the second one showed up and was *exactly* the same color. It just makes you go, 'Holy cow!' It's a really odd story. One doesn't have a serial number and was first sold in Minnesota, the other was found in Arizona after its owner moved from Minnesota..."

Describing Copper Iridescent, Bonamassa says, "From five feet, it looks brown. But in direct light, you see gold metalflake in the finish, and it's just *so* cool. And it's fascinating to think they kept the color around even though it never appeared on their custom-color charts. It's just crazy how all three of the guitars came in different ways. They're *identical*, and it's the coolest trio you'll ever see."

Bonamassa was recently contacted by a nephew of the original owner of the first '55, saying he had the amp his uncle bought with the guitar; the two-tone GA-20 is once again sitting alongside its partner.

"For mere mortals, stumbling upon a guitar like any *one* of these would be life-changing. But finding all three? It's just another day in the life of Joe," Koehler said with a chuckle.

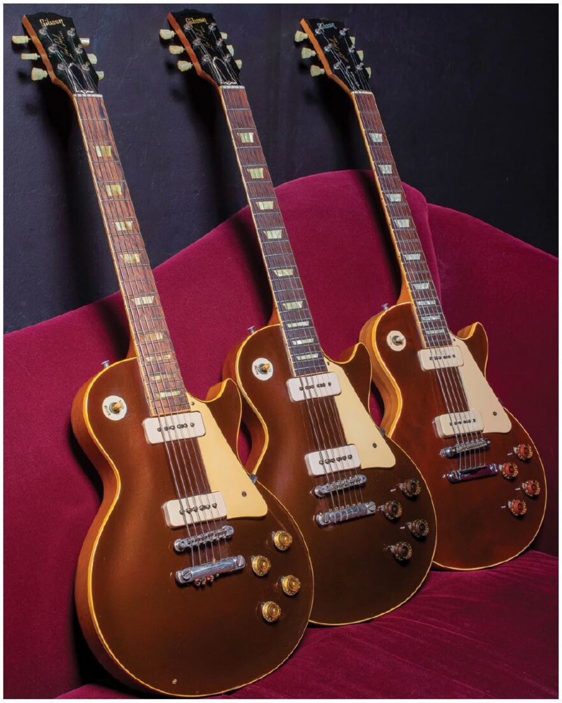
Bonamassa adds that they offer a lesson for all guitar collectors.

"*Never* say you have the only one of something," he laughed. "Because the chances are good you'll be wrong."

Speaking of, Koehler recently found a Copper Iridescent guitar listed in the 1956 ledger, prompting him to clown with Bonamassa.

"I texted an animated gif of Yoda saying, 'No, there is another' and a photo of the entry."

Bonamassa says, "We have no idea where it is," and insists he's not on the hunt. If he waits, though, it'll probably drift its way through time and space to land at Nerdville. **VG**



Coaxing the guitars' true color poses a challenge; in most light and from most angles, Copper Iridescent is an underwhelming brown. Intense direct light, though, reveals a dramatic metalflake.

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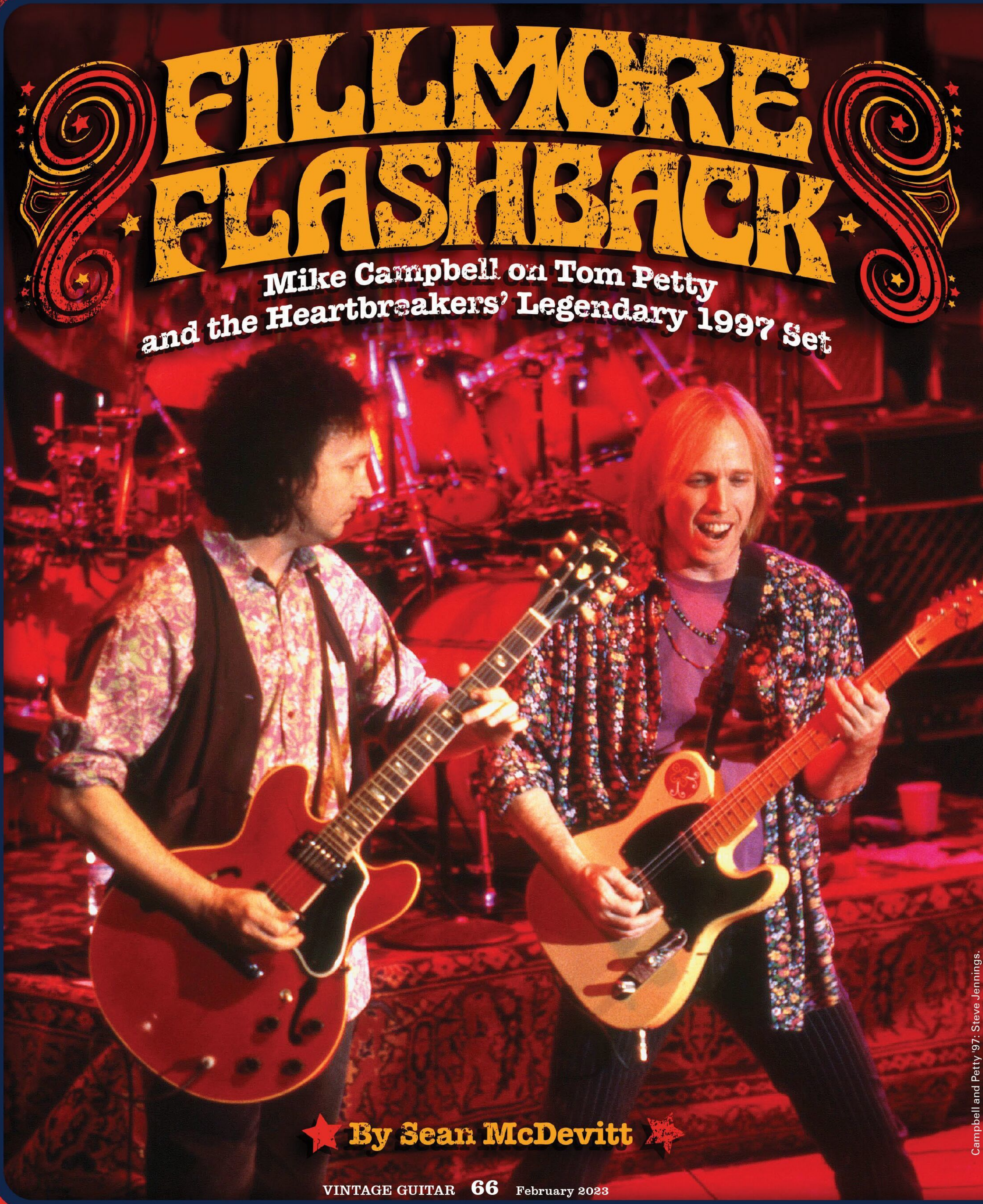
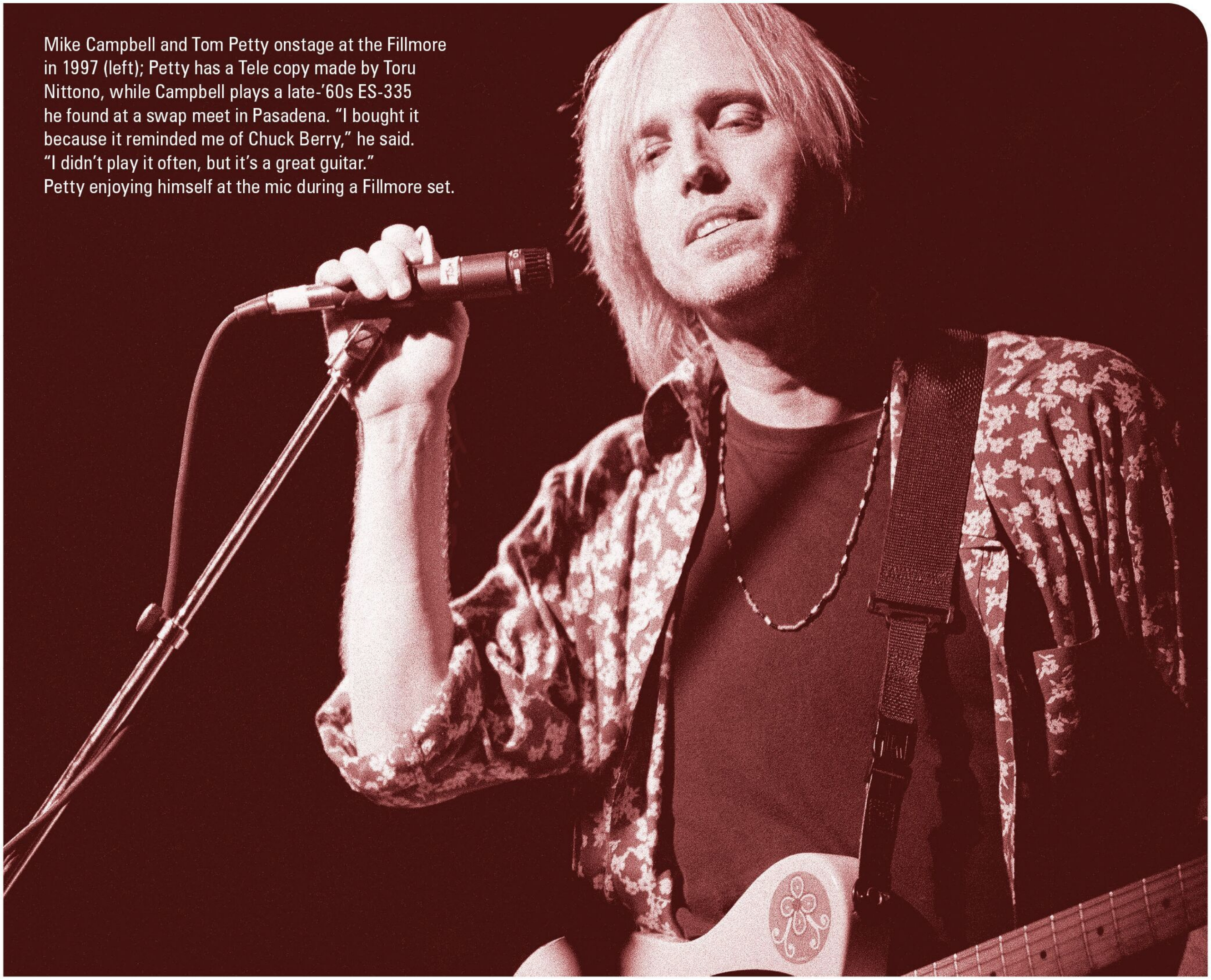
FILLMORE FLASHBACK

Mike Campbell on Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers' Legendary 1997 Set



Campbell and Petty '97: Steve Jennings.

By Sean McDevitt



Mike Campbell and Tom Petty onstage at the Fillmore in 1997 (left); Petty has a Tele copy made by Toru Nittono, while Campbell plays a late-'60s ES-335 he found at a swap meet in Pasadena. "I bought it because it reminded me of Chuck Berry," he said. "I didn't play it often, but it's a great guitar." Petty enjoying himself at the mic during a Fillmore set.

Tom Petty '97: Martyn Atkins.

In early 1997, Tom Petty was unsure what the future held for him or his band, the Heartbreakers. But he was searching for something new on the heels of his hit solo album, *Wildflowers*, and the enormously popular tour that followed.

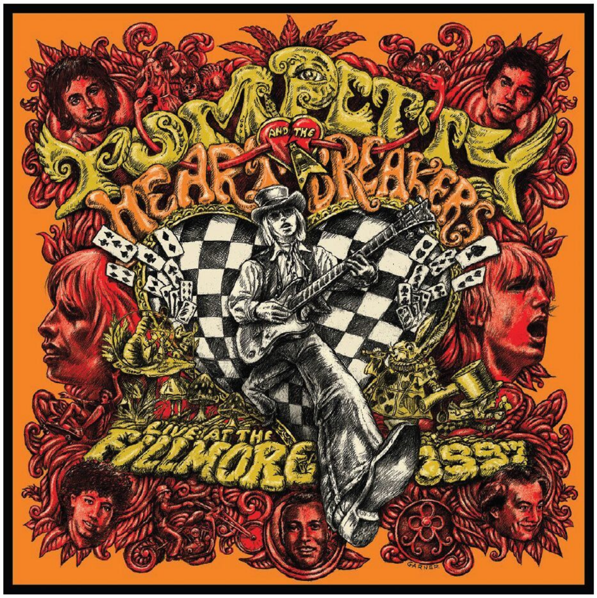
"I just want to play and get away from the land of videos and records for a while," the 46-year-old told *San Francisco Chronicle* writer Joel Selvin. "We want to get back to what we understand. If we went out on an arena tour right now, I don't think we'd be real inspired. We're musicians and we want to play. We've made so many records in the past five years, I think the best thing for us to do is just go out and play and it will lead us to our next place, wherever that may be."

"Wherever" proved to be San Francisco's iconic Fillmore Auditorium – a venue Petty had never even entered, let alone to perform. Once he did, however, he went big with a 20-show residency billed as "The Fillmore House Band," doing intimate shows before audiences of 1,100.

The stand, which began January 10 and concluded February 7, tossed away the proverbial script; instead of running through faithful deliveries of obligatory hits, Petty and company worked up an array of covers and rarities, re-cast his biggest solo hits, and embraced a freewheeling, spontaneous musical spirit that came to define the event.

With the band rejuvenated and recognizing that something special was happening, they decided to make multi-track recordings of the last six shows. Those performances have just been released as *Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers: Live at the Fillmore, 1997*.

"It was very kinetic and uncharted territory," remembers longtime Heartbreakers guitarist Mike Campbell. "For a player used to playing to, for lack of a better word, a 'script' every night, it was freedom and an opportunity to just take a chance here and there, and be brave enough to be like, 'Well, I don't really know what I'm going to play next, but I'm going to really dig in.' I would hope something magical happened, and it usually did because of the room and



the audiences. It was such an inspiring place to be, it brought that out of us."

Like Petty years before, Campbell acknowledges the pre-Fillmore routine of playing large venues, and the strong sense of obligation that came with it.

"People spent a lot of money on tickets and parking, and they were used to hearing songs they like," he said. "We figured it was our job to give them what they want. We would sometimes throw a surprise in here and there, but we didn't want to take advantage of the crowd, so we gave them the songs they were familiar with – most of the time."

But those rules didn't apply at the Fillmore. Freed from convention, the performances preserved on the new live album find the band exploring the kaleidoscope of American music – interpreting songs by J.J. Cale ("Crazy Mama"), Bill Withers ("Ain't No Sunshine"), The Kinks ("You Really Got Me"), Chuck Berry ("Around and Around"), Booker T & the M.G.'s ("Green Onions") and the Grateful Dead ("Friend of the Devil"), among others. More than half of the tracks on the new release are covers.

Another notable component of the 20-show run was the stream of guests; performances by blues legend John Lee Hooker and Roger McGuinn are included (though he's not part of the album, Carl Perkins appeared early in the run).

Some of the finest guitar interplay is found on Petty's solo hits; "It's Good to Be King," "Runnin' Down a Dream," "Free Fallin'," and "You Wreck Me" all feature extended guitar parts, with Petty taking his share of solos. "Jammin' Me" is played with a fury and immediacy that threatens to upstage the 1987 studio version. And "Mary Jane's Last Dance," a track added to the band's 1993 greatest hits package, became a guitar-centric centerpiece of the Fillmore shows. While the studio version clocked in at less than five minutes, live versions routinely pushed 10.

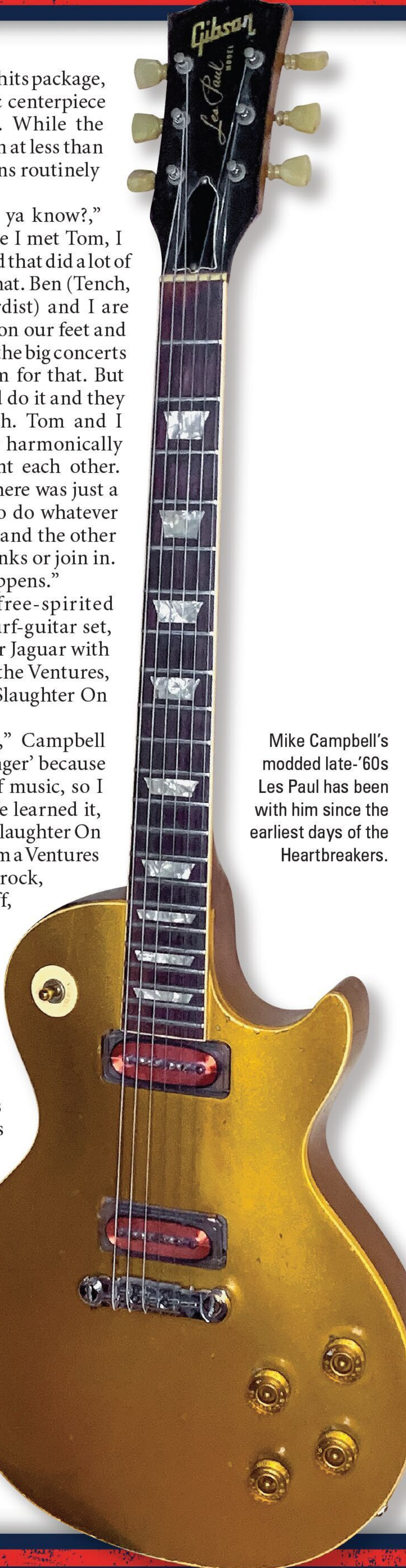
"It was the Fillmore, ya know?," Campbell quips. "Before I met Tom, I was in a three-piece band that did a lot of free-form playing like that. Ben (Tench, Heartbreakers' keyboardist) and I are really good at thinking on our feet and extending songs, and at the big concerts there wasn't much room for that. But at the Fillmore we could do it and they embraced that approach. Tom and I had this ability to play harmonically together, to complement each other. It was just a great fit. There was just a freedom at those gigs to do whatever popped into our heads, and the other guy would fill in the blanks or join in. It's magic when that happens."

Underscoring the free-spirited nature, Campbell did a nightly surf-guitar set, tackling "Goldfinger" (on a Fender Jaguar with loads of reverb) before turning to the Ventures, most notably the 1964 chestnut "Slaughter On Tenth Avenue."

"["Slaughter"] was Tom's idea," Campbell recalls. "I had the idea for 'Goldfinger' because I loved the melody and I love surf music, so I brought that in one afternoon. We learned it, then Tom said, 'Why don't we do 'Slaughter On Tenth Avenue?' I remembered it from a Ventures record, and I like surf guitar; I like rock, I like blues, I like all kinds of stuff, but surf guitar has a space where the guitar can be the lead voice. I enjoy that quite a bit."

Another of what Campbell calls the "oddball" selections on Live at the Fillmore, 1997 is "The Date I Had with That Ugly Old Homecoming Queen," a song anchored by a hard-rock riff. "It's not much of a song," Campbell says with a laugh. "It was a riff I played at the sound check, and Tom said, 'I'll make something up to that.' We put it in the show that night, and that's what he came up with. It was all very loosey-goosey, spontaneous, and exciting."

While recalling the energy and musical boldness of the Fillmore stand, Campbell also paused to recollect his instrument and amp choices.



Mike Campbell's modded late-'60s Les Paul has been with him since the earliest days of the Heartbreakers.

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"I had an interesting amp setup, with a Kustom, a blond Bassman, and something else I don't remember. It's been a long time (laughs)."

Campbell hadn't heard the Fillmore tapes until work began on the new release. But revisiting them provided another opportunity to marvel at Petty's artistry – the songs, the lyrics, the remarkable power to communicate through music.

"As a guitar player, he was like John Lennon," Campbell explains. "He was the foundation of the rhythm, and he was *great* at the rhythm. Occasionally, he would play licks here and there, but mostly he could lay down the rhythm and sing over it like John might do, and it just worked.

"He had a solid feel, good voicings on his chords, and he always had to get a good tone. He was just *really* good at what he did – very solid, tight, and creative. But mostly he had an exuberance and feel nobody else has. [When] a songwriter writes a song on the guitar and sings it to himself, they go together – the voice and the guitar create this *thing* – and Tom's was really special."

The final night of the Fillmore stand, February 7, was a blowout three-hour show with 40 songs including 10 encores and was broadcast over the radio in addition to an early version of streaming; "We're also live on the internet… whatever that is," Petty tells the crowd.

"Everybody should do this," Petty said when it had ended. "It's going to be tough to go back to the arenas. I'm not saying we won't – I'm sure we will – but it'll never be the same. I wouldn't be surprised if we did this again next year."

The band did indeed return to the Fillmore for seven shows in March of '99 and replicated the experience several times in the ensuing years, including five shows at the Vic Theatre, in Chicago, in April of '03. In May and June of '13, they did five shows at New York City's Beacon Theatre, followed by six at the Henry Fonda Theatre, in Hollywood.

Petty died October 2, 2017. Much has been written about his death, and life on for Campbell and the other members of the Heartbreakers. In '18 and '19, he toured with Fleetwood Mac. His current band, The Dirty Knobs, is a hard-rocking, '60s-inspired outfit that in 2021 released its second album *External Combustion*, and last year opened a string of dates for The Who. A gig at The Hollywood Bowl on November 1, 2022, was particularly emotional, given the fabled venue where Petty and the Heartbreakers played their final gig on September 25, 2017 – a week before Petty's death.

"I never dreamed I'd be back on that stage in any way, shape or form," Campbell says. "But there I was, opening for The Who. The last time I saw Tom was standing onstage at that gig. It felt very sweet to be near him in that sense again. It was closure in a little way, I guess. Very spiritual."

For the 73-year-old who first met Petty in their native Florida in 1971, revisiting tapes like those that make up *Live at the Fillmore, 1997* stirs mixed emotions.

"Of course there's melancholy because I lost my friend," he says. "But mostly I'm just so proud and happy that we did what we did. I like revisiting the joy of it. And if there's a tinge of missing my brother, that goes along with it. But mostly it's just the joy of celebrating the music we made together. I'm very proud of it."

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Upcoming Events

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***Denotes a new or updated listing.**

Lake County Musician's Swap Meet, at Renninger's Florida Twin Markets, 20651 Hwy 441 Mt. Dora FL. Hours 8-3 For more info contact Allen at info@lcmsm.com, (352)735-0025 or visit www. lcmsm.com. January 8, 2023, March 12, 2023 May 14, 2023

2023

JANUARY

2023 Winter Ohio Guitar Show, Sunday, January 8, 2023 at the Makoy Center 5462 Center St, Hilliard, OH 43026 Show hours 11:30-5:00. For more info, contact Marc at (740) 797-3351. guitardigest@frontier.com, www.ohioguitarshows.com.

Amigo Bay Area World Guitar Show, January 14-15, 2023, Marin Civic Exhibit Hall, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael, CA. For more info call Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com

Amigo SoCal World Guitar Show, January 28-29, 2023, OC Fair & Event Center, Arlington & Fairview St., Costa Mesa, CA. For more info call Larry at (918) 288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com.

Illinois Guitar & Gear Expo, Sunday January 29 at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds 213 W 4000S Rd. Kankakee, IL 60901, 10am – 3pm For more info, visit: https://www.illinoisguitarexpo.com/

FEBRUARY

Orlando International Guitar & Music Expo, February 3-5, 2023 at the Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 West Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL. Public hours Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4. For more info contact Morty Beckman at (850) 962-4434, guitarexpo22@yahoo.com or visit www.guitarexpo.net **(See Advertisement on page75.)**

Best Guitar Show, Sunday, February 5th 2023 at the Blair County Convention Center, 1 Convention Center Dr., Altoona, PA 16602 from 10am to 5 pm. Contact Mike Pencak at 724-448-5907 or michaelsauto903@yahoo.com

Musician's Swap Meet, Sunday, February 5th at the Hide Away Cafe and Lounge, 207 W Main St., Bensenville, IL 60106. Hours 9am to 3pm. Contact George Berger at 630-417-0714 or geo.berger@sbcglobal.net

The Greater Pittsburgh Guitar Show, Sunday, February 26. Printscape Arena, 114 Southpointe Blvd., Canonsburg, PA. Show hours 11-4. For more info contact Scott at (412) 716-8411, scotpro@comcast.net or visit www.guitarshowusa.com. **(See Advertisement on page 72.)**

MARCH

The 2023 Cincinnati Guitar Show - Our 29th year! Sunday, MARCH 5th , 10am -4pm, at the Sharonville Convention Center, 11355 Chester Rd Cincinnati OH 45246. Contact Denny Melchers at 513-503-1072. More info at CINCYGUITARSHOW.COM & FB.

33rd Annual Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, Sunday March 5th 2023, 9am-3pm at the Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd, Elk Grove Village, Il 60007. Contact Beverly Bakes, R&B Productions for more info at 847-931-0707 or Bakesguitar@aol.com

West Coast Guitar Show – NorthWest, Saturday, March 11th, 2023 at the Renton Community Center - Renton, WA. For more info contact Bruce Adolph 253-445-1973 or bruceadolph@mac.com

Carolina Guitar Show – Asheville, March 11-12, 2023 at the WNC Ag Center I-26, Exit 40, 1301 Fanning Bridge Rd., Fletcher/Asheville, NC 28732. For more info, call Bee 3 Vintage at 828-298-2197 or visit www.bee3vintage.com

Amigo Nashville Guitar Show, March 25-26, Williamson County Ag Expo Park, Franklin, TN. For more info Larry at (918)288-2222, amigoshows@stringswest.com, Ruth at (817) 312-7659, ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Dave at (417) 850-4751, davelcrocker@gmail.com orvisit www.amigoguitarshows.com.

The Lansing Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, March 26th at the Causeway Bay Convention Center, 6820 S Cedar St., Lansing, MI 48911 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com **(See Advertisement on page 73.)**

The Indiana Guitar Show, March 31- April 2, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds 1900 E. Main St. Danville, IN. For more information contact Eddie at (317) 272-5222 or visit www.theindianaguitarshow.com

APRIL

Central Coast Guitar Show, Saturday, April 15, 2023, 10am-4pm at the Radisson Hotel Ballroom, 3455 Skyway Dr. Santa Maria CA 93465. For more info call 805-431-3067 or email centralcoastguitarshow@charter.net or visit www.CentralCoastGuitarShow.com

The Elmira Vintage Guitar Show, April 23, 2023 at the Woolrich Memorial Center, 24 Snyder Ave S Elmira ON Canada D3B 1Z1. For more information go to www.elmiravintageguitarshow.ca

Northeast Guitar Expo, Sunday, April 23, 2023 at The Verve Hotel & Convention Center, 1360 Worcester St., Natick, MA. Hours 11-4. For more info call Peter Occhineri (860) 983-6774, email – NortheastGuitarExpo@gmail.com, website – www.NortheastGuitarExpo.com

The Grand Rapids Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, April 30th at the Double Tree Hotel, 4747 28th St SE Grand Rapids MI 49512, 10am -4pm.For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@

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10am-4pm

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Kalamazoo County Expo Center
2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo MI, 49048

Contact: Shawn VanSteeland 517-410-6409 Visit: www.MusicInstrumentSwap.com

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ANN ARBOR

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10am-4pm

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Upcoming Events

KEEP UPDATED AT WWW.VINTAGEGUITAR.COM

musicinstrumentswap.com **(See Advertisement on page 73.)**

MAY

Dallas International Guitar Festival, May 5-7, 2023 at the Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N Stemmons Fwy, Dallas, TX, For more info visit www.guitarshow.com.

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, May 6-7 at the Indoor Treasure Barn, 1380 Rt 100, Barto, Pa. Hours 8-1. For more information contact Justin at (484)256-6515 or info@jakesfleamarket.com

Eastern Kentucky Guitar Show, Sunday, May 7, 2023, 11:00AM - 4:00PM, Boyd County Convention & Arts Center, 15605 KY180, Catlettsburg, Kentucky 41129. Contact Jeff at 606-922-0626 or 606-923-4130.

Midwest Music Gear Swap, Sunday, May 21, 2023 10am to 4 pm at 48 E. Bath Rd. Cuyahoga Falls (Akron) Ohio 44223 For more information, go to http://www.midwestmusicgearswap.com or call Corey at (330)753-5050.

JUNE 2023

Amigo SoCal World Guitar Show, June 17-18, 2023, OC Fair & Event Center, Arlington & Fairview St., Costa Mesa, CA. For more info call Larry at (918) 288-2222. amigoshows@stringswest.com, www.amigoguitarshows.com.

SEPTEMBER

Jake's Guitar Show & Music Swap Meet, September 16-17, at the Indoor Treasure Barn, 1380 Rt 100, Barto, Pa. Hours 8-1. For more information contact Justin at (484)256-6515 or info@jakesfleamarket.com

The Kalamazoo Music Instrument Swap, Sunday Septembr 17th at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center, 2900 Lake St., Kalamazoo, MI 49048 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com **(See Advertisement on page 73.)**

OCTOBER

33rd Annual Chicago Vintage Guitar Expo, Sunday October 1st 2023 9am-3pm at the Holiday Inn, 1000 Busse Rd, Elk Grove Village, Il 60007. For more info Contact Beverly Bakes, R&B Productions at 847-931-0707 or Bakesguitar@aol.com

The Indiana Guitar Show, October 13-15, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds 1900 E. Main St. Danville, IN. For more information contact Eddie at (317) 272-5222 or visit www.theindianaguitarshow.com

Guitarlington 2023, October 21-22 at the Arlington Convention Center, 1200 Ballpark Way, Arlington TX. For more info contact Ruth Brinkmann (817) 312-7659 ruthmbrinkmann@gmail.com, Larry Briggs (918) 288-2222 larryb@stringswest.com, Dave Crocker (417) 850-4751 davelcrocker@gmail.com, Fax 817-592-3381 www.amigoguitarshows.com

NOVEMBER

The Ann Arbor Music Instrument Swap, Sunday, November 5th at Weber's Inn, 3050 Jackson Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48103 from 10am - 4pm. For more information contact Shawn VanSteeland at 517-410-6409 or at info@musicinstrumentswap.com **(See Advertisement on page 73.)**

If you have information regarding upcoming guitar shows or events, visit http://www.vintageguitar.com/guitar-show-submission or e-mail james@vintageguitar.com. All submissions must be received by the 10th of each month, or they will appear in the next available issue. This listing is done as a service to our readers and we reserve final determination as to its contents.

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FULL-BEAST MOORE

VINNIE MOORE
DOUBLE EXPOSURE

Vinnie Moore
Double Exposure

Neoclassical shredder Vinnie Moore's latest features vocals for the first time. *Double Exposure* is a heavy-rock record saturated with funky overtones and a high degree of guitarmanship. Joined by vocalists Keith Slack, Ed Terry, Mike DiMeo, and Brian Stephenson, the album is divided into half vocal and half instrumental; Moore stays on point for longtime fans while expanding his purview. With a history of exploring the commonalities between classical music and rock-fusion, longtime fans are well aware of Moore's guitar prowess from solo records and stints with Alice Cooper and UFO.

"Vertical Horizon" and "Rise" offer '90s-style hard-rock funkiness where catchy riffs mingle with melodicism and tasteful whammy-pedal flourishes. Moore goes full beast mode on "Paid My Dues" and "Rocket," utilizing massive riff density, diminuendos, and hyper-fluent rock improvisation. The guest vocals are killer.

"Southern Highway," 'Hummingbird," and "River Flow" display Moore's hankering for Southern rock, while his Seattle influence rears its head on "Still Waters Run Deep" and "Breaking Through." Moore's super mutant powers are employed for good as he puts aside his Bach pedal-point licks, speedy harmonic-minor runs, and sweep-picked arpeggios in favor of soulfully executed pentatonic fury. **– *Oscar Jordan***

TOM PETTY
HEARTBREAKERS
LIVE AT THE FILLMORE 1997

Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

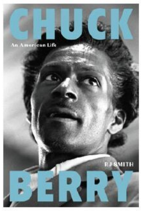
Live at the Fillmore (1997)

Expanded from its origins as a radio broadcast, *Live at the Fillmore* captures Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers in transition, retreating from large arenas, music videos, and record-making in favor of a 20-show run at the legendary San Francisco venue.

That residency in January and early February of 1997 resulted in a deep, often-spontaneous exploration of the band's musical roots, with covers comprising a majority of the 58 cuts, and underscoring the shows' freewheeling spirit. As author Joel Selvin writes in his liner notes, "Setlists were written every night and routinely ignored."

In addition to tackling songs by everyone from Chuck Berry to the Zombies – and backing guests John Lee Hooker and Roger McGuinn – guitarist Mike Campbell (see interview in this issue) and Petty bring garage-band passion to their own catalog, rocking hard on an explosive "Jammin' Me" and dueling on "Mary Jane's Last Dance," pushing the song past 10 minutes. "Runnin' Down a Dream" and "Free Fallin'" also get extended workouts. Campbell, meanwhile, pays tribute to The Ventures with "Slaughter On Tenth Avenue."

All told, it's a unique addition to the discography – a document of a band seeking direction but joyously revisiting its musical roots in the meantime. **– *Sean McDevitt***



R.J. Smith

Chuck Berry: An American Life

In this probing biography, R.J. Smith writes, "Chuck Berry was an African-American astronaut on an extended solo flight to violate established practices in business, culture, social mores, and laws."

Berry, who published his own autobiography in 1987, seemed to live his life as a bitter, rebellious reaction to racism. His revolutionary music was subtly dangerous. Chuck's lifestyle? Outwardly so, as sex scandals and prison time damaged his career. Strangely, he could be both dismissive and protective of his work, and occasionally appeared mystified by the meaning behind his songs; a chapter here is devoted to 1972's double-entendre novelty ditty "My Ding-A-Ling," Berry's only #1 single.

Guitar-related stories include using a blond Gibson ES-350T on a 1955 recording session that yielded his first hit, "Maybellene." And, performing was physically transcendent. As Smith says, "He discovered that playing the guitar had a physical component: moving around with the instrument changed the sound, changed the feeling, and changed the mood of the room."

Ultimately, Berry remains a notoriously complicated enigma. Dick Alen, who was the icon's agent from the '50s until his death in 2017, notes that Berry didn't have personal

Vinnie Moore: Gretchen Johnson.

Jim McCarty in 2016.

BOX OF CACTI

By Dan Forte

The 1970 debut album by Cactus blasted off with a gnarly guitar riff for the ages, as the band's rendition of "Parchman Farm" out-rocked any and all transformations of jazz composer Mose Allison – yes, even the Who's "Young Man Blues." Before "shred" became a term, the barrage from Jim McCarty's Les Paul threw down for all comers.

Cactus leads off the eight-CD *Evil Is Going On: The Atco Albums, 1970-1972* box, which also includes studio albums *One Way... Or Another*, *Restrictions*, and *'Ot 'N' Sweaty*, as well as two double-CD volumes of *Fully Unleashed: The Live Gigs*. The order of the day was reworking the repertoires of Howlin' Wolf, Bo Diddley, and Little Richard, power ballads, and plenty of blues-laced guitar licks.

The supergroup consisted of drummer Carmine Appice and bassist Tim Bogert (the rhythm section from Vanilla Fudge), singer/harpist Rusty Day, and McCarty, a veteran of Mitch Ryder & the Detroit Wheels and the Buddy Miles Express (not to be confused with the Yardbirds drummer of the same name).

"When Jeff Beck came out with the *Truth* album and *Beck-Ola*, it just blew me out the door," McCarty told me from his home near Detroit. "That's the direction I wanted to go. That's why I left Buddy Miles. Pretty much at precisely the same time, Tim and Carmine were tired of Vanilla Fudge and wanted to put together a power trio. Led Zeppelin had just come over from England, opening for the Fudge, blowing them off the stage. They got Rusty, a Detroit guy from Amboy Dukes, on vocals. Initially they were talking about doing something with Jeff. But he got in a serious car accident, so I became the guitar player. I flew to New York and we started jamming, and the energy level was just off the charts."

The result was more Zeppelin than Beck.

"Zeppelin was an entirely different thing than the Jeff Beck Group, and Jimmy Page was a brilliant engineer in addition to being a guitar player. Jeff's album didn't have the [same] sonic quality. For me, Zeppelin was the greatest of all hard-rock bands. Not only could they kick ass, they also had the acoustic side covered. Jimmy was simply brilliant."

Blues and jazz make up McCarty's biggest influences; "If I had to pick one, B.B. King was the man," he says. "But all the Kings – Freddie and Albert, too. And it might sound ironic, but the music I listen to most at home is jazz. That's what I grew up with, like all the Blue Note stuff. Wes Montgomery, Kenny Burrell, and Grant Green are the big three. The hard-bop stuff."

When I query about a resemblance between the "Parchman Farm" lick and an instrumental workout by another former Yardbird, McCarty laughs, "Except tempo-wise. There was a compilation called *What's Shakin'*, and it had 'Steppin' Out' by Eric Clapton & the Powerhouse. That really made me sit up and take notice. I talked to Mike Bloomfield when he got back from England in '66, and he said, 'There's a guy over there' – which is why he put down the Telecaster and went to a Les Paul. Then on that *Blues Breakers* album, Eric's playing through a 50-watt Marshall. That tone – what can you say?"

In *Evil*'s liner notes, Appice admits he had no blues background.

"Tim and Carmine weren't blues guys at all," McCarty agrees. "That's one of the reasons I eventually left the band. I love playing with Carmine, and to this day I miss that. The guy is brilliant. But Timmy would get a little too flamboyant for me. There wasn't enough bottom-end going on, or blues feel. I wasn't happy with what was going on with the bass. On nights when he'd actually listen and play *with* you, he was a hell of a bass player. But there were too many nights when he was off doing his own thing. You had three guys playing their ass off, but they're all in separate rooms. If you're not playing in the band, what's the point?"

Sweaty is the only disc in the collection that doesn't feature McCarty, in what he calls "Grade B Cactus," after he left. Following a gap of 34 years, they reunited in 2006 for *Cactus V* (not in the box), with Jimmy Kunes replacing Day, who was murdered in 1982.

Also not falling into the time frame of *Evil* is *Black Dawn*, the last McCarty-involved CD from 2016. "I produced that. From an audio point of view, that's the best-sounding CD."

So, if eight Cactus CDs aren't enough for you, also get a copy of *Black Dawn*, and crank it up.

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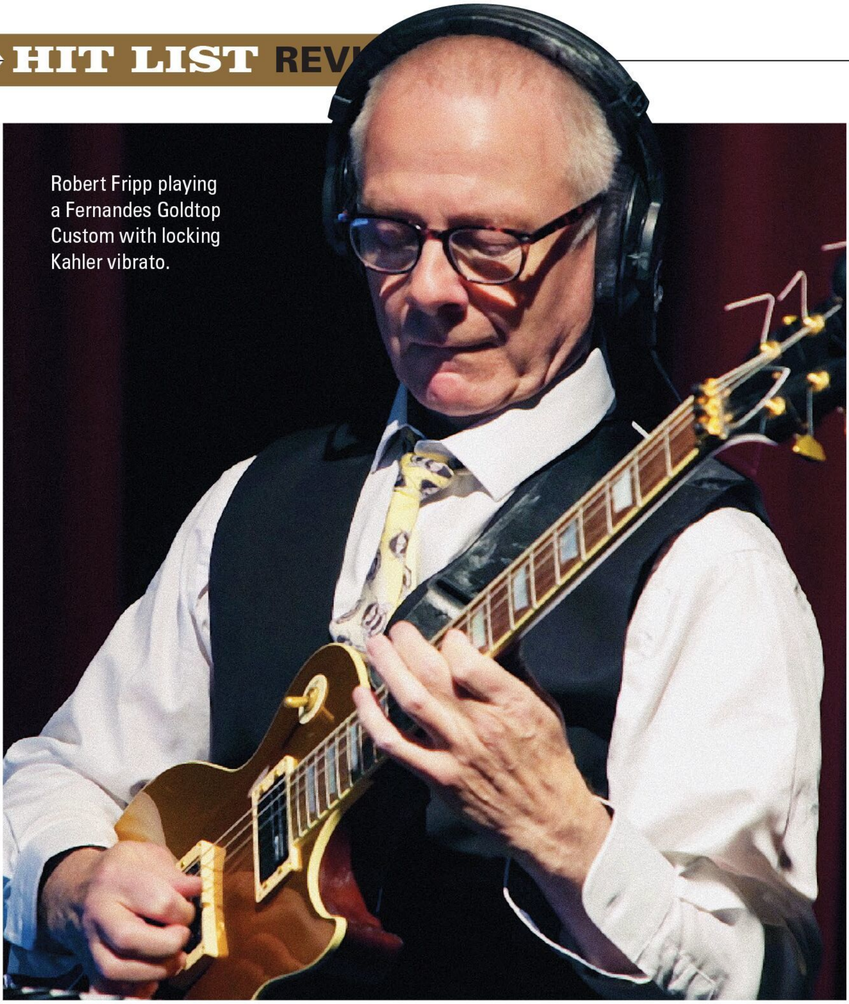
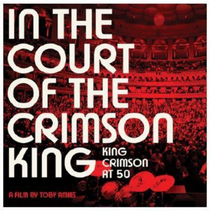
Jim McCarty is interviewed in this month's "First Fret."



Robert Fripp playing a Fernandes Goldtop Custom with locking Kahler vibrato.

friends, but he asks, "Who knew him? Anybody with a record player." – ***Bret Adams***



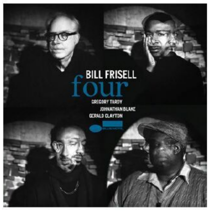
King Crimson and Toby Amies

In the Court of the Crimson King

This film asks the musical question, "Is Robert Fripp a virtuoso guitarist, sensitive tone-poet – or brutal taskmaster?" The answer is, resoundingly, *yes*. Throughout this rock doc, Fripp's acerbic comments intermingle with a backstage view – literally – of the prog institution, including co-guitarist Jakko Jakszyk. Interviews with ex-Crim members Adrian Belew and Bill Bruford provide vital insights.

Since 1969, Crimson has gone through endless permutations, but the focus here is a recent tour. You feel for roadie Paul Stratford, who describes hard work in a succession of "horrible, cold, dark halls." Get up close to Fripp's favorite Les Paul clone, a Fernandes Goldtop Custom with Kahler locking vibrato. A tech reveals the importance of Fripp's irreplaceable electronics rack, containing decades of stored sounds.

There are difficult interviews with drummer Bill Rieflin, on the tour while suffering from cancer before his death in 2020. Turning to 1969-'70, original Crimson frontman Greg Lake gets thrown under the tour bus as a power-hungry egomaniac. This being Robert Fripp, we expect navel gazing, but the chief pleasure is observing the real life of working musicians. It's a difficult job, but a result is the glorious noise of King Crimson. – ***Pete Prown***



Bill Frisell

Four

Over the course of 40-plus solo albums and countless collaborations, Frisell has established himself as one of the most original and adventurous jazz guitarists. On 10 new originals and three revisited from *Good Dog, Happy Man*, including the title tune, he teams for the first time with pianist Gerald Clayton and drummer Johnathan Blake, with Greg Tardy back on saxophone, clarinet, and bass clarinet. With no bass, it's a fascinating – even daring – concept.

The 71-year-old's embrace of Americana is evident, as melodies similar to the spiritual "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" and Stephen Foster's "Hard Times Come Again No More" waft by. His compositions are sometimes angular, other times bluesy, but it's his adherence to melody that shines.

His main guitar is a Bigsby-equipped J.W. Black with Jeff Callahan pickups – humbucker neck and mini-humbucker bridge ("reminiscent of Neil Young," Bill says) – through a Carr Sportsman amp. Other than reverb, the only effect is his Line 6 Delay at the very end of the last cut, "Dog On A Roof." It's hardly a gimmick in his hands, and these 12 tracks put Frisell among the greatest with just wood and wire. – ***Dan Forte***

WILLIE NELSON
LIVE AT BUDOKAN
武道館ライブ
ウィリー・ネルソン
2/23/84
TOKYO

Willie Nelson

At Budokan: 2/23/84

On a late-February day in 1984, a robust 50-year-old Willie and "Trigger," his beloved Martin N-20, hit the fabled Tokyo stage running. In particularly powerful voice, he delivered an explosive 28-song performance covering favorites, Outlaw anthems, and pop chestnuts from his *Stardust* album. This particular band packed added wallop – lead guitarist and former Nashville A-Team giant Grady Martin.

Wondrous and incendiary picking moments abound. Willie and Trigger shred their way through the Texas polka "Under the Double Eagle" as well as "Me and Bobby McGee." His lyrical eloquence enhances "Harbor Lights" and "Without a Song," while "On the Road Again" features a rousing, melodic twin-lead interlude from Willie and Martin. A warp-speed "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" also features solos from both. The closing "Whiskey River" reprise becomes a three-way jam with Willie, Martin, and guitarist Jody Payne.

Martin, toting a Les Paul, has abundant moments. A master accompanist, he adds subtle, graceful amplified figures around Willie's vocals, especially notable on a gorgeous "Blue Skies." He expertly enhances a

Robert Fripp: Toby Amies.

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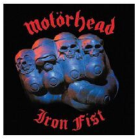
MOONALICE
FULL MOONALICE VOL. 2

MOONALICE

Full Moonalice, Vol. 2

Featuring stirring vocals from Lester Chambers of psychedelic soul pioneers the Chambers Brothers, this EP includes the Brothers' "Love, Peace And Happiness" along with covers of Burt Bacharach and Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell. Guitarist Roger McNamee gives "Yes We Can Can" by New Orleans' Allen Toussaint some unexpected country licks and weaves snaky lines through the Grateful Dead's "Uncle John's Band." *– **DF***



MOTÖRHEAD

Iron Fist - 40th Anniversary Edition

Iron Fist remains important as the final album from the classic Lemmy/"Fast" Eddie Clarke/Phil "Philthy Animal" Taylor lineup. The blistering title track, surprisingly groove-driven "I'm the Doctor," and bass-rumbling "Speedfreak" crush righteously. Bonuses include unreleased demos (notably the 100-mph rocker "Young & Crazy") and a complete '82 Glasgow show. Reliably consistent, with minor style variations; musically speaking, that's Motörhead for ya! *– **BA***

BRIAN JOHNSON
The Lives of Brian

BRIAN JOHNSON

The Lives of Brian

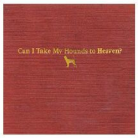
The affable AC/DC bellower traces his rags-to-riches story including the making of *Back in Black*. Mentions of Angus and Malcolm Young's loud guitars foreshadow his battle with career-threatening hearing problems (though they weren't the direct cause), but he also recalls suggesting they play "Nutbush City Limits" at his audition instead of "Smoke on the Water" – and how happy that made the brothers. *– **BA***

JOE ROBINSON
The Prize

JOE ROBINSON

The Prize

A renowned acoustic ace and singer, Robinson accentuates funky grooves and likable vocals on his latest release, using his powerful right hand to fuel "Gotta Keep Moving" and "The Prize." You may even hear echoes of John Mayer in the smokey soul of "Fine Line" and "So Much More." For Chet/Tommy fingerpickin', dig "Wandering Man." *– **PP***



TYLER CHILDERS

Can I Take My Hounds to Heaven?

Childers' fifth studio outing is unique – like a trio of albums in one. The eight songs here are each reimagined three different ways, all within the realms of gospel and country music. His clever songwriting is backed by James Barker on guitars, baritone, and pedal steel, plus Jesse Wells on fiddle, guitars, mandolin, and banjo. *– **MD***

DANIELE GOTTARDO
INKBLOT

DANIELE GOTTARDO

Inkblot

Influenced by classical composers like Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky, Gottardo's concept album blends symphonic and pastoral themes with rock-fusion guitar mastery. Electric guitars pirouette within a wonderland of violins, cellos, and effortless arpeggiation. "Bittersweetness" and "Restless Nature" send listeners on a multi-dimensional storybook odyssey. Spellbinding legato and two-handed tapping are used judiciously in service of mesmerizing orchestral compositions. *– **OJ***

VANILLA ZEPPELIN
Vanilla Fudge

VANILLA FUDGE

Vanilla Zeppelin

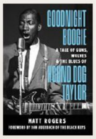
This savage organ quartet is still alive and kickin', armed with the heaviest Led Zeppelin riffs they could afford. With Mark Stein on keys, Vince Martell on guitar, Pete Bremy on bass, and the incomparable Carmine Appice on drums, these guys aren't f**king around. Reimagining classics like "Ramble On," "Moby Dick," and "Dazed and Confused," they bring it on home every time. *– **OJ***

Nenni
On the Ranch

EMILY NENNI

On the Ranch

A powerful, searing Nashville singer/writer, Nenni and guitarist/collaborator Mike Eli wrote nine of these 10 numbers. Her aggressive, sultry vocals especially cut through on "Can Chaser," the funky "In the Mornin'," and the title song. A powerful guitarist, Eli and his band create a sound steeped in vintage Waylon Jennings enhanced by Eddy Dunlap's steel and resonator guitar. *– **RK***



MATT ROGERS

Goodnight Boogie: A Tale of Guns, Wolves & the Blues of Hound Dog Taylor

Hound Dog Taylor's 1971 debut LP and the creation of Alligator Records is one of the most oft-told stories of the blues. But largely unknown are details of the slide master's life – from his 1920s Mississippi childhood to the untamed boogie that became his musical trademark. This engaging, anecdote-rich biography brings to life one of Chicago's most celebrated (yet underrated) bluesmen. *– **SM***

QUEENSRŸCHE

QUEENSRYCHE

Digital Noise Alliance

Guitarist Michael Wilton and crew keep the "thinking man's metal" genre alive with epically classic heaviosity. Guitarist Mike Stone is back as Kamelot drummer Casey Grillo steps in for Scott Rockenfield, delivering an intense record displaying artistic growth and stupefying signature guitar arrangements. Vocalist Todd La Torre, Stone, and Wilton crush it on "Tormentum," "Behind The Walls," and "Nocturnal Light." *– **OJ***

GOOD TROUBLE
ANNIKA CHAMBERS
& PAUL DESLAURIERS

ANNIKA CHAMBERS & PAUL DESLAURIERS

Good Trouble

Individually, this husband-wife team have won blues awards, but their first duo album isn't confined to the genre. Along with strong originals, the set includes rockers like Mountain's "Mississippi Queen." Guitarists DesLauriers and J.P. Soars are up to the task, as demonstrated by Little Willie John's "Need Your Love So Bad," with blazing leads matching the couple's soulful vocals. *– **DF***

RON BOSSE
BURNING ROOM ONLY

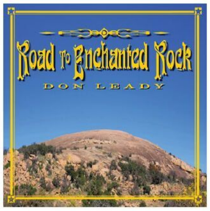
RON BOSSE

Burning Room Only

Call it funk-fusion or smooth jazz, but Bosse ups the ante with fast chops reminiscent of Lee Ritenour. On "Bossman," his improv is sweet 'n funky, but adds shreddy 16th notes. "Strutter" has a sunny beat and Ron's brisk phrasing. If smooth jazz puts you to sleep, this album is the cure – it's groove-laden and brimming with lively guitarmanship. *– **PP***

Miko Marks

song's emotional impact; pensive on "Help Me Make it Through the Night," lyrical and swinging on "All of Me," and staggeringly moving on "Stardust." This may very well be Willie's definitive concert recording. *– **Rich Kienzle***



Don Leady

Road To Enchanted Rock

Referring to an artist as a city's "institution" is cliché, but in the case of Don Leady and Austin, it fits. As co-founder of the LeRoi Brothers, leader of the Tail Gators, one of the Big Guitars From Texas, and accordionist with Los Cadillos, in addition to his solo releases, he typically has two or more projects going at any given time. Somehow, he is never spread too thin.

Following his *Cumbia Meets The Blues* and *Panther Pink* EPs, his eclectic tastes, rootsy guitar playing, and prolific songwriting are evident on this all-instrumental set of 10 originals. Expertly exploring Latin rhythms, it's less rockin', less swampy than much of his catalog, but features melodies you'll be humming days later.

The pretty "Rattler Run" employs nice bass-string tremolo, as does the cha-cha "Oasis Mirage." The bluesy "New Orleans Swirl" is reminiscent of "One Mint Julep," while "Il Pendelo" is hypnotic *and* majestic. No telling where Leady will land next, but it's sure to be interesting. *– **DF***

MIKO MARKS
AND THE RESURRECTORS
FEEL LIKE GOING HOME

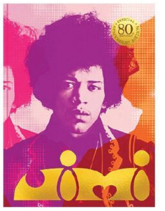
Miko Marks and the Resurrectors

Feel Like Going Home

Miko Marks can sing the hell out of country, blues, and soul. And with guitarist/songwriter/producer Steve Wyreman again at her side, this new studio album may be her best yet.

The lead single "This Time" should be a starmaker; with rays of country and R&B, Marks' impassioned vocals are accented by Wyreman's guitar, organ, bass, and lap steel. The title track contains echoes of Creedence, the Stones, and maybe even Aretha, Wyreman's guitar channeling a powerful Mick Taylor aura. "Trouble" rolls and tumbles like a lost '50s Muddy Waters gem.

Live, Marks and the Resurrectors scorch. Playing an acoustic set as openers on Little Feat's latest tour, the band left nothing on the table, with Wyreman unleashing funky rhythms and stirring leads from a way-vintage Martin, Justin Phipps on harmonica, and Effie Zilch adding harmony vocals. Playing electric, the ensemble can transform from Chicago blues drive to Muscle Shoals R&B. Side note: If you want to get the chills, check out Marks' stellar cover of CCR's "Long As I Can See The Light" on Youtube. And seek out Wyreman's other projects; he's a guitarist to watch. — ***Michael Dregni***



Janie Hendrix and John McDermott

Jimi

Jimi Hendrix would now be 80 years old and remains at the top of the "What if they'd lived?" list of musicians. This lavish book by Jimi's stepsister, Janie, and McDermott (who oversee official archival releases) is an illustrated biography heavy on photos including family snapshots, handwritten lyrics, postcards, handbills, and live images.

Interesting tidbits abound. Hendrix started on ukulele, then moved to a second-hand acoustic and, finally, electric – no lessons, just records and radio. Jimi is quoted regarding the influence of a blues pioneer, saying, "The first guitarist I was aware of was Muddy Waters. I heard one of his records when I was a little boy and it scared me to death because I heard all of these sounds. Wow! What is that all about? It was great."

He also reflects on the Experience's infamous (and brief) tour as the Monkees' opening act, telling how he liked their members but, "[They] were like plastic Beatles." Regarding *Electric Ladyland*, he was "...frustrated that the final mastering had compromised the elaborate mixes he and Eddie Kramer had labored over."

Best of all, you'll drool over photos of Jimi's axes, from Jazzmasters and CBS Strats to his groovy psychedelic Flying V. *– **BA***

Miko Marks: Amanda Lopez.

The Cowsills
Rhythm of the World

The Cowsills

Rhythm Of The World

The Cowsills were pop-rock's first family band and, yes, the model for the Partridge Family. During a two-year period beginning in 1967, they scored four Top 40 hits, with "The Rain, The Park & Other Things," predating both the Jackson 5 and the Osmonds.

The lineup originally consisted of five brothers and mother, Barbara. Today, it's brothers Bob and Paul with sister Susan. Barry and Bill are deceased, while John drums with the Beach Boys – so in keep-it-in-the-family tradition, Susan's husband, Russ Broussard, is behind the traps.

Their first new album in 30 years is a revelation. The sibling harmonies are not only intact, they've matured. The songwriting, production, and musicianship are self-contained and impressive. Bob handles most lead work, like the title song's 12-string Byrds-esque riff. On "Hawks On The Line," he summons Duane Eddy twang about as good as anyone else.

They tackle timely themes of homelessness and climate change ("Lend A Hand" and "Nuclear Winter"). The biting closer, "Katrina," is named for the hurricane and flood that took Barry's life in New Orleans in 2005. This is anything but nostalgia. – ***DF***

Yates McKendree

Yates McKendree: Anthony Scarlati.

YATES McKENDREE
Buchanan Lane

Yates McKendree

Buchanan Lane

A Grammy-winning engineer, multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, songwriter, and already a veteran of some of Nashville's most-storied stages, the release of 21-year-old Yates McKendree's debut album mandates the addition of another accolade – top-shelf purveyor of the blues.

The son of studio owner and longtime Delbert McClinton bandleader Kevin McKendree (who provides piano and organ throughout), the younger McKendree exhibits a guitar prowess that belies his age here, from a faithful reading of the 1956 B.B. King B-side "Ruby Lee" to the minor-key original "Wise," which evokes the master's "The Thrill Is Gone."

Some of the most-satisfying excursions come when McKendree (see interview in this month's "First Fret") takes on slow blues; "No Justice" tastefully builds before exploding with furious flurries of notes, and "Please Mr. Doctor" gets a slightly slower tempo – and a wider groove – than Tampa Red's original. Both simmer with intensity.

"Always a First Time," an early-'60s hit for New Orleans R&B icon Earl King, injects soul into the proceedings, as does the Guitar Slim ballad "It Hurts to Love Someone Else." A pair of T-Bone Walker chestnuts – "Papa Ain't Salty" and the ballad "No Reason" – remain true to their sonic roots. An auspicious debut from a Music City young gun. – ***SM***

YOU DON'T MESS AROUND WITH JIM
JIM CROCE

Jim Croce

You Don't Mess Around with Jim 50th Anniversary

Jim Croce was a pop artist with laser-guided instincts for writing hits. In an impossibly short run of fame – barely two years – he wrote singles that remain staples of '70s AM radio. A September, 1973, plane crash took him and lead guitarist Maury Muehleisen, but this reissue celebrates the album's 50th anniversary and its avalanche of hits.

If James Taylor kicked open the door for folk-pop troubadours (remember Harry Chapin and Jonathan Edwards?), Croce showed up right on time. His gift was penning simple, direct melodies for his heart-tugging lyrics and earnest voice. Accompanied by soulful backing vocals, "You Don't Mess Around with Jim" is a guitar boogie featuring Muehleisen's sparkling solos on a Martin dreadnought. "Time In a Bottle" remains a bittersweet ballad, with precise acoustic arpeggios and Croce's mesmerizing voice. Recorded in early 1972, it only released as a single *after* Jim and Maury's deaths, rising into a monster #1 single. Bittersweet, indeed.

"Operator" is another acoustic gem, a perfect combination of Croce's voice and Muehleisen's lead guitar. Also make sure to cue up the gorgeous "Photographs and Memories." Most likely, this Jim Croce song will break your heart all over again. – ***PP*** **VG**

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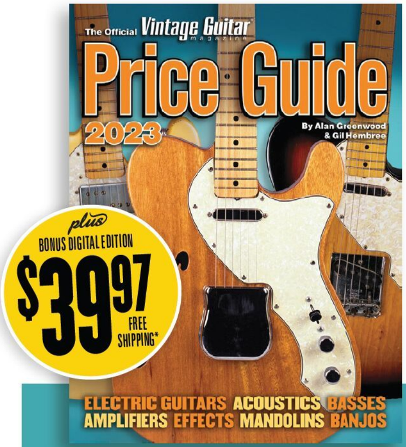
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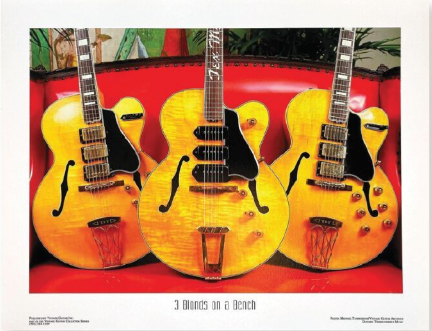

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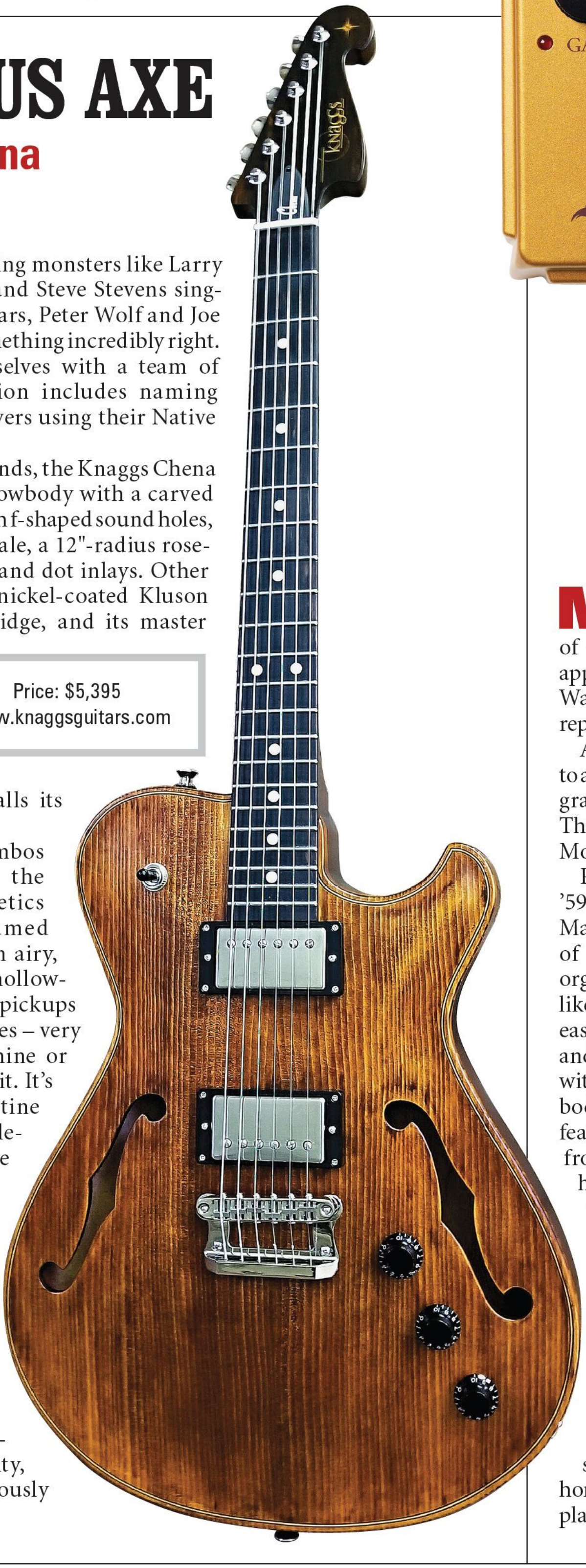

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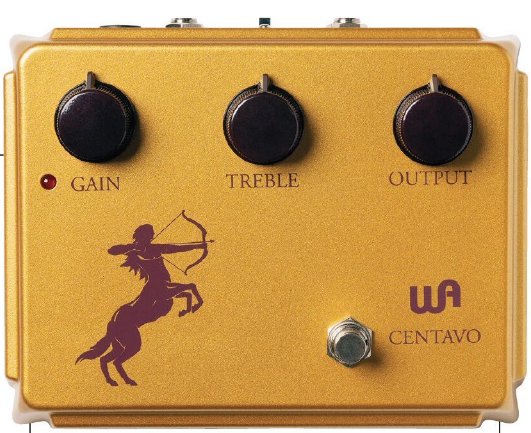

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Most pedal enthusiasts consider a vintage Klon Centaur the pinnacle of overdrive boxes. With originals now approaching $10,000, it makes sense that Warm Audio has created a cost-effective reproduction with its Centavo.

At first glance, the Centavo looks similar to a Klon, with its gold box, three knobs, and graphic borrowing from Greek mythology. The obvious difference is the addition of a Mod switch along the top edge.

Pushing the pedal with a '63 Strat and '59-reissue Les Paul through a vintage Marshall 50-watt amp produced a variety of excellent tones, all transparent and organic – less like a stompbox and more like an overdriven amp. The Centavo is easy to use, with controls for Gain, Treble and Output. As we increased distortion with Gain, both guitars retained their full body without thinning out – a very useful feature that differentiates the Centavo from other overdrives. Treble provides high-end sparkle that was particularly useful with humbuckers. Conversely, the Mod switch added welcome low-end with the Strat. Overall volume is controlled by the Output knob, and in the 12:00 position, the pedal didn't alter overall volume. Beyond distorted tones, the Centavo offers a functional clean boost with the Gain dialed in at 9:00 with Output at 2:00.

The Centavo is a versatile and great-sounding pedal that will be especially at home on the pedalboards of blues and rock players. – ***Tom Guerra***

NATURAL BEAUTY

Breedlove's Organic Performer Pro Concert Aged Toner CE

With climate change on the minds of so many, guitar builders have started to offer more instruments that are good tone tools *and* sustainable for the planet. Breedlove's Organic series uses tonewoods certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), like the Performer Pro Concert Aged Toner CE.

Designed in Breedlove's Oregon headquarters and built in China, the Performer Pro uses solid wood – not Richlite, resin-infused, or plywood. The Pro Concert has a solid European spruce top that makes itself known with one strum of a chord; ringing loud and true, it's particularly surprising for a cutaway. You can't fake that kind of projection.

Back and sides are African mahogany in "Suedeburst" gloss, with tortoise binding. The 25.3"-scale neck is mahogany, and other materials include black-stained ovangkol for the fretboard (20 frets) and bridge, plus a 1.69"-wide Tusq saddle. Gold tuners with black buttons and offset 3mm brass dots top off the accoutrements. For gigging, there's a Fishman Flex Plus-T electronics package. Breedlove gets bonus points for its unique and attractive headstock, inlaid with their logo.

Price: $1,149
www.breedlovemusic.com

In hand, the Performer Pro Concert has that much-desired combination of volume and warmth, without being shrill or obnoxiously loud. There's an even level of dynamics that is admirable, making this a useful tool for strumming chords or playing fingerstyle. Our tester had a comfortable neck and was well set-up for fingerpicking and strumming. If you need a quicker setup for lead work, lighter strings and lower action may be needed.

Plugged in, the Performer Pro Concert sounds big, clear, and bright; the Fishman preamp responds well to subtle EQ adjustments. Perhaps the *coolest* feature is the built-in tuner, which works whether or not the guitar is plugged in. Hold down the Volume knob until the circular tuner window (mounted on the side) illuminates. If it's blue, the string is out of tune; turn it until the digital meter hits center and it turns green. The Fishman Flex Plus-T pickup, preamp, and tuner are a standout feature.

Add its included plush hard case, and the Breedlove Performer Pro Concert Aged Toner CE is a solid mid-price winner, boasting tone, looks, FSC tonewood, and spiffy electronics for live work and recording. The market for cutaway acoustics is crowded, but the Pro Concert's excellent construction and earth-friendly materials make it a worthwhile contender. – ***Pete Prown***

GEARIN' UP

EVH WOLFGANG STANDARD EXOTIC

The EVH Wolfgang Standard Exotic has a compound-radius (12" to 16") maple fretboard, 22 jumbo frets, EVH Wolfgang humbuckers with three-way toggle, single Volume and Tone controls with treble-bleed circuit, black-chrome hardware, EVH/Floyd Rose Special bridge, and R2 locking nut.

D'ANGELICO EXCEL SS TOUR

D'Angelico's Excel SS Tour has a semi-hollow body, C-shaped neck, ebony fretboard with 12" radius, Supro Bolt Bucker pickups, and '30s-inspired diamond sound holes. It's available in three finishes.

BOSS SL-2 SLICER

This Boss SL-2 Slicer chops guitar sounds into 88 percussive patterns with eight types and 11 variations. Attack and Duty knobs provide waveform control, tempo can be adjusted, and its Balance knob helps adjusts direct/effect mix.

Got something new and cool? Let us know at
www.VintageGuitar.com/Gearin-Up-Submission

PERIOD PIECE

Fender's American Vintage II '57 Stratocaster

Sure, we all drool over Fender Custom Shop axes, but those instruments are sometimes out of wallet's reach. Coming to the rescue is Fender's new American Vintage II series, which attempts several things at once: on the surface, it offers period-accurate re-creations of classic planks, down to tiny details, but more importantly, delivers them in a solid mid-price range. The AVII '57 Stratocaster brings an honest '50s vibe without inducing a sticker-shock coma.

Among the attributes that make the '57 feel like the real deal is its V-shaped neck, that essential "Synchronized Tremolo," and Pure Vintage '57 single-coil pickups. Offered with a body cut from alder or ash, the maple neck sports the classic 25.5" scale, 21 frets, and a 7.25" radius. The single-ply pickguard is white, and there are aged-yellow pickup covers and knobs. A nitrocellulose finish completes the old-school presentation.

Price: $2,099.99
www.fender.com

Off the bat, the neck makes a great first impression. While Strat neck carves fluctuate widely from skinny to fat to wide, the '57 has that all important "deep" shape that evokes vintage Leo. The profile is comfortable and subtle (unlike, say, a Clapton Strat), and sits right in the pocket of your hand. The advantage of a fatter neck, many will say, is it transmits body resonance better, alluding to the adage "fat neck, fat tone." This '57 reissue has that in abundance.

For tone, you'll have high expectations for Strat quack, and the '57 does not disappoint. Running through the five positions, it has all the warm, cutting, and out-of-phase tones you expect, depending on your choice of amplifier or recording interface.

With the AVII '57 Stratocaster, Fender has done a fine job packaging vintage specs into an American-made axe that won't break the bank. For a Strat that has vibe out the wazoo, that's a big deal. – ***Pete Prown***

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RETURN OF A LEGEND

Xotic Effects' RC Booster Reissue

Twenty years ago, Xotic Effects unleashed its iconic RC Booster. With variable Gain, EQ, and Volume controls, it was a mainstay on pedalboards the world over for players seeking top-shelf transparent boost tones. To celebrate the company's 20th anniversary, it just released an updated version of that classic.

While Xotic has produced more-elaborate versions of the RC, many guitarists have a soft spot for the original. Versatile, transparent, and edgy, the active Treble, Bass, Gain, and Volume controls of the reissue produce all the best features. With up to 20dB of Volume boost and +/-15dB of treble and bass, the RC Reissue offers a range of textures to push a rig into low-gain ecstasy. True-bypass switching takes it out of the signal path when disengaged, and it's powered by a 9-volt battery or 9-/18-volt AC adapter with a new top-mounted input.

The RC Booster Reissue shines in its ability to sculpt volume, sustain, and overtones without coloring overall sound or changing the personality of a rig. It's also great for stacking – pushing overdrive pedals to greater glory with nuanced transparency and dynamics. It's one of those pedals most players will "leave on." – ***Oscar Jordan***

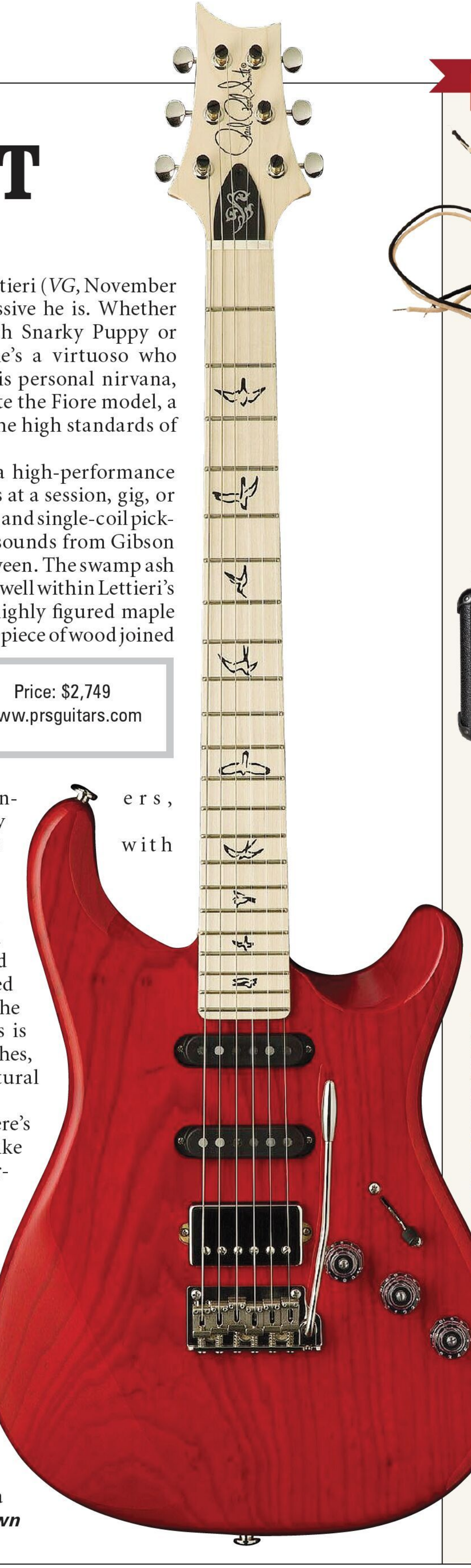
TONE POET

The PRS Fiore

If you've seen guitar wizard Mark Lettieri (*VG*, November '22) at work, you know how expressive he is. Whether laying down deep funk rhythms with Snarky Puppy or whipping out a fluid fusion solo, he's a virtuoso who requires a versatile axe. To achieve his personal nirvana, Lettieri collaborated with PRS to create the Fiore model, a variation on the HSS design built to the high standards of Paul Reed Smith.

The Fiore (Italian for "flower") is a high-performance solidbody meant to cover all the bases at a session, gig, or rehearsal. For tone, it pairs humbuckers and single-coil pickups with a swamp-ash body, offering sounds from Gibson to Fender and most everything in-between. The swamp ash adds a distinctive sonic snap and quack, well within Lettieri's funky wheelhouse. The axe sports a highly figured maple neck with scarfed headstock (a separate piece of wood joined at the lower frets). A bolt-on design, the neck sports a 22-fret maple fretboard (10" radius) with silhouetted bird inlays and a floral inlay on the truss rod cover, and familiar 25.5" scale. Hardware includes PRS locking tuners, a two-point vibrato bridge, five-way pickup selector, and three black knobs with one Volume and two Tones.

Price: $2,749
www.prsguitars.com



In hand, this PRS does not disappoint. Pay attention to its special Fiore neck carve, which is deep like the best old Strats and Teles. It's not a thin shred neck; it sits in the palm like a well-aged baseball glove. The rounded edges of the fretboard add comfort, and fret dress is expert-level. Unlike heavy poly finishes, its lightly finished neck offers a natural wood feel.

While the Fiore is a passive plank, there's epic wiring under the hood; it looks like the standard HSS scheme of a superstrat, push/pull pots under the Tone knobs allow for upward of 15 pickup combinations. These choices will keep any player busy for days and adds to the massive versatility of the Fiore. Tone-wise, you can get whatever you need out of the Fiore. In its myriad pickup combinations, you'll find all sorts of Strat quack, jazz roundness, and fat or razor-edged tones for lead work.

Sure, this PRS is a pricey plank, but you get what you pay for. Like co-developer Lettieri, the Fiore is a top-of-the-line performer. – ***Pete Prown***

GEARIN' UP

FENDER J MASCIS JAZZMASTER PICKUPS

Fender's J Mascis Jazzmaster signature pickup set uses enamel-coated magnet wire, Alnico II rod magnets, and flush-mount pole pieces. The neck pickup measures 7.27k, bridge 7.31k.

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MESA BADLANDER 25

Mesa's Badlander 25 has an EL-84 power section, footswitchable Clean, Crunch, and Crush channels, and Dyna-Watt mode that switches between 25 watts output in Class A/B pentode and 10 watts in Class A/B triode. Other features include series effects loop and Celestion Creamback 65 speakers.

SOLSTICE TELLURION

Solstice Guitars' Tellurion is offered as a fully chambered semi-hollow, half-chambered, or as a solidbody using swamp ash. Its three-bolt neck joint uses a shaped pocket, and other features include Gotoh hardware, hand-wired switching circuits, and pickups by Lollar, Duncan, Dark Moon, and TV Jones.

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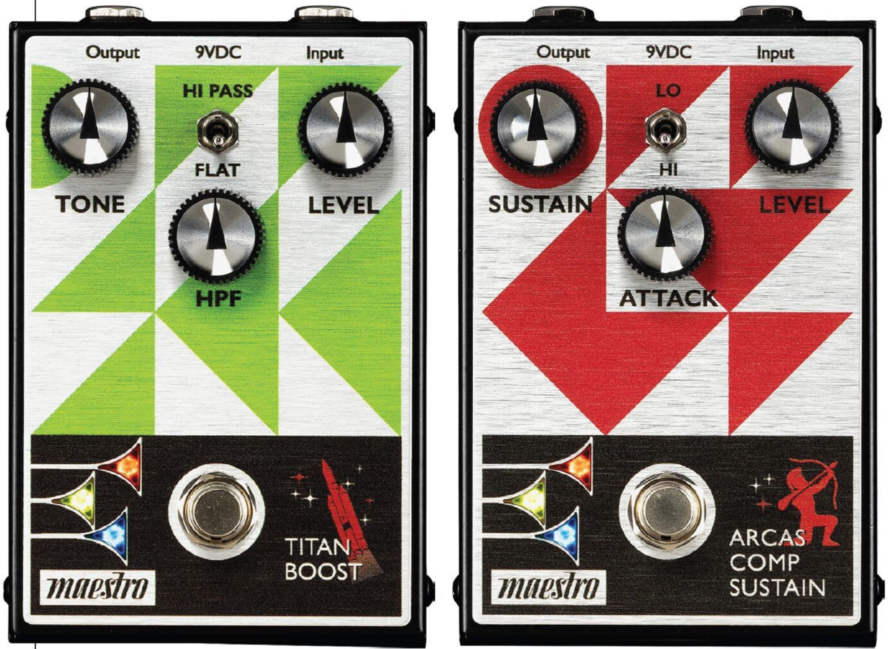


LOUDER, TIGHTER

Maestro Electronics' Titan Boost and Arcas Compressor Sustainer

Maestro Electronics has been around for 60 years and is best known for creating the FZ-1 Fuzz-Tone used by Keith Richards to play the legendary lick on "Satisfaction."

Maestro recently introduced five pedals in a new Original Collection that includes the Arcas Compressor Sustainer and Titan Boost, each purporting to deliver secret sauce for any guitar rig.

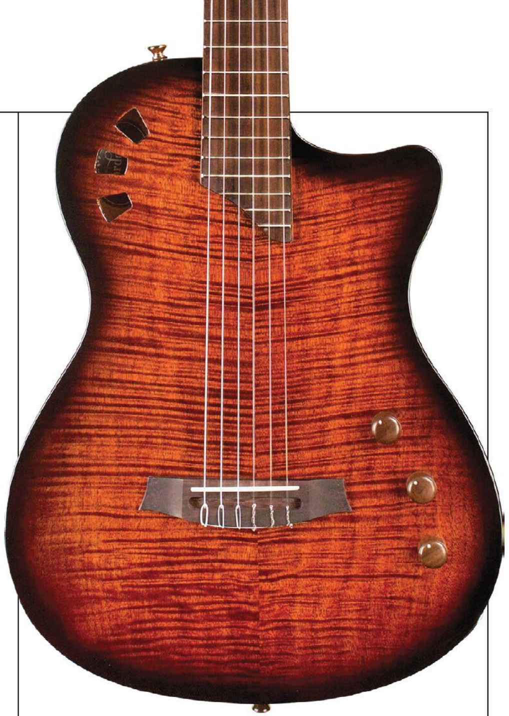
Price: $159 (Titan Boost), $149 (Arcas Compressor Sustainer)
www.maestroelectronics.com

The Titan Boost is great for beefing up an amp with natural overdrive or making guitar solos pop. Its Hi-Pass Filter knob tweaks low-end frequencies while Flat mode maintains transparency. There's also a Tone knob to adjust high frequencies, and Level increases output volume up 25db. All help dial up oomph with sizzle and warmth without sounding piercing or muddy, no matter if you're using humbuckers or single-coils. Construction is solid and includes true-bypass switching and a colorful LED indicator.

The Arcas Compressor Sustainer tightens single notes, fattens funky rhythm parts, and works as a clean boost to punch through a stage mix. It's great for any style of music and offers two modes of compression – Hi for lower-output pickups/single-coils, Lo for humbuckers. The Sustain knob sets compression level from mild to intense, Attack controls response time (how quickly the compression engages), and Level alters overall output. The LED indicator lets the user know when the pedal is engaged, which is great for onstage use. The result is a tight, punchy sound that adds sweetness or a thicker attack to single notes or complex chord voicings.

The Titan Boost and Arcas Compressor Sustainer both create a lo-fi earthiness that maintains an amp's character while adding tonal flexibility and volume. Though they boast retro aesthetics, their function is state-of-the-art sweetening.

– Oscar Jordan



Price: $699
www.cordobamusicgroup.com

CLASSICAL GAS

The Cordoba Stage

With a 1.5"/fully chambered mahogany body, the Stage – Cordoba's first foray into the world of nylon-string electric guitars – brings a pleasing, ergonomic single-cut shape dressed with a beautiful flamed-veneer top.

Because its 48mm nut and 16" fretboard radius are slightly thinner than a traditional nylon-string, the Stage should ease steel-stringers transition to the world of classical-style guitar. Whether sitting or standing, the Stage is comfortable in every respect, and produced plenty of volume when played acoustically. And when plugged in, Cordoba's new Stage pickup system, designed with Fishman, is designed specifically to enhance the guitar's nylon-string sound while providing a welcome end to the feedback issues that often plague guitars of this type. With controls for Volume, EQ, and Body Blend, it's a snap to dial-in commendable acoustic/electric tones; tuned to DADGAD, modal runs and riffs were particularly satisfying. The system runs on a 9-volt battery accessed at the back of the guitar.

The Stage is an impressive instrument that ships in a nifty recycled-nylon-shell denim gig bag. Overall, it's a classical gas.

– Bob Cianci VG

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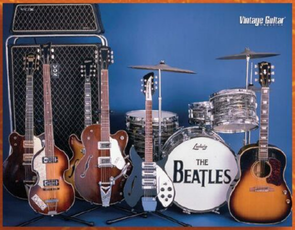
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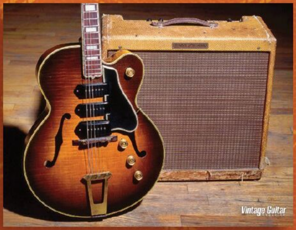
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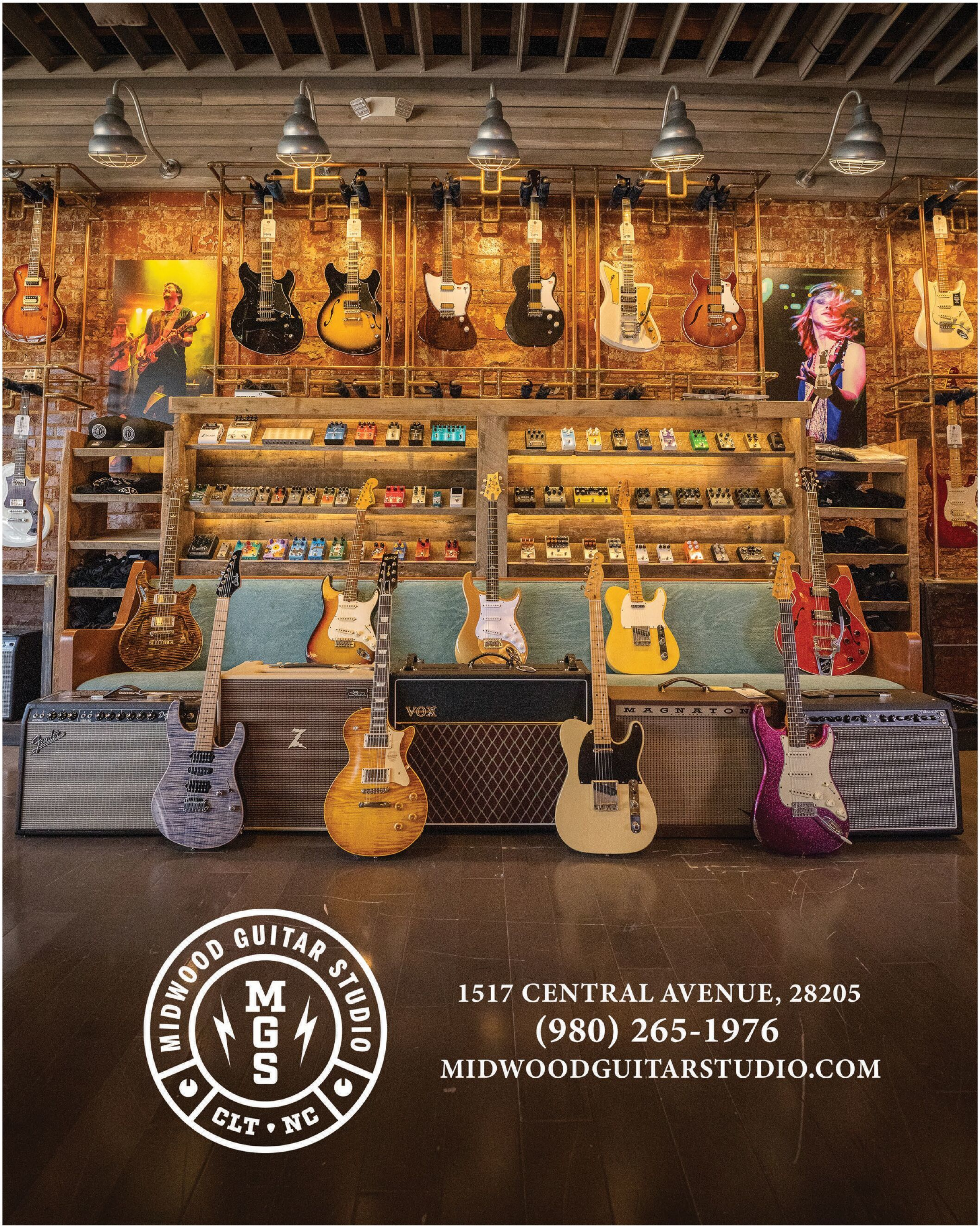
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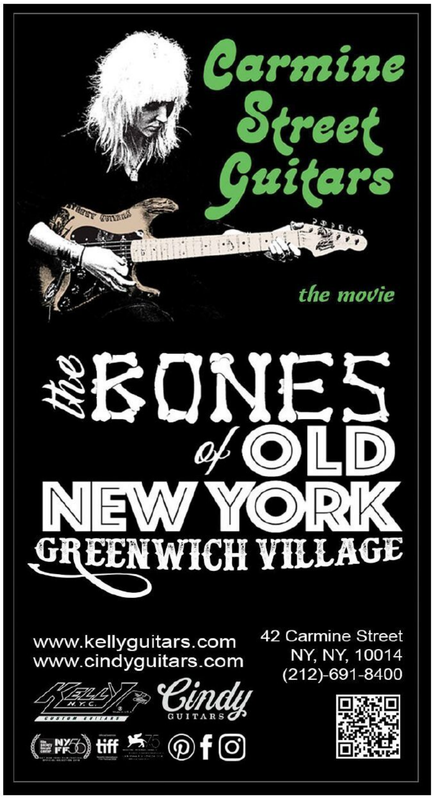
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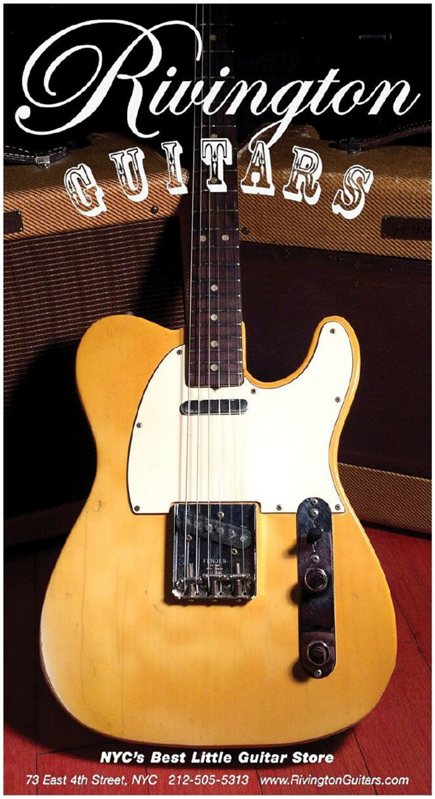
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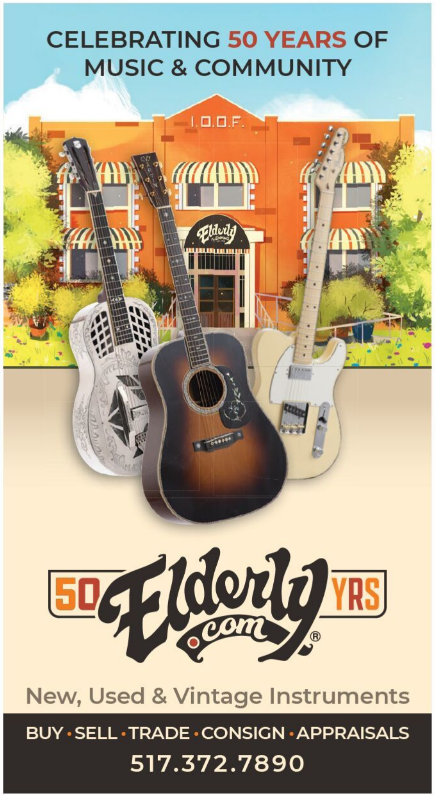
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1) John Childs has been feeding his fretted frenzy as a *VG* subscriber for two decades. In back are his Nash T68 in Paisley, T72 in Silver Sparkle, Gibson Custom Shop LP in Crimson Red Burst, Nash T52 in white, and a gloss-black PRS Korina with Brazilian fretboard. In front are a Les Paul Murphy Lab '59 reissue and two Koll Duo Glides. The amp is a Two Rock Studio Signature with 1x12.

2) Long-time subscriber Duane Lindsay's collection includes (clockwise from top left) a '54 Martin D-18, '76 Gibson MK-81, '54 Epiphone Emperor Zephyr, and a Klein M43.

3) Ronald Edwards has been collecting since returning home after serving in Vietnam in 1972. A *VG* subscriber for the last decade, his instruments include (front, from left) a '72 Dorado resonator, '89 G&L ASAT, '63 Fender Jazz, '69 Les Paul Custom, '90 Les Paul Junior, '80 Firebird, Les Paul Classic Custom, '90 SJ-200 Quilt, '66 Martin D-18, '66 D-28, '80 D-45, and an Alvarez AD 4104. In back are a '75 Sigma, '63 Gibson C-0, Martin Backpacker, '59 ES-125, '80 ES-355, '66 Strat, '89 Strat, '79 Tele, '20 Strat, and a '98 Alvarez RB30C.

4) Mark Wally bought his first PRS Custom 22 (middle front) in 2003 because his hero, the Doobie Brothers' Tom Johnson, plays PRS. Years later, he bought the other five from the brother of a collector who passed away. They are (from left) a 513 Rosewood in Matteo Blue, a 20th Anniversary Swamp Ash Special in River Blue, a 305 in Light Blue, a 20th Anniversary Single Cut Artist in Emerald, and a 2012 Custom 24 Artist Experience in Bonnie Pink.

5) Blues guitarist/recording artist (and *VG* Online contributor) Tyler Morris' collection ranges beyond 300 pieces. He recently acquired this '53 Les Paul from the family of its original owner, and nabbed this '69 LP Deluxe at a pawn shop while on tour in Connecticut.

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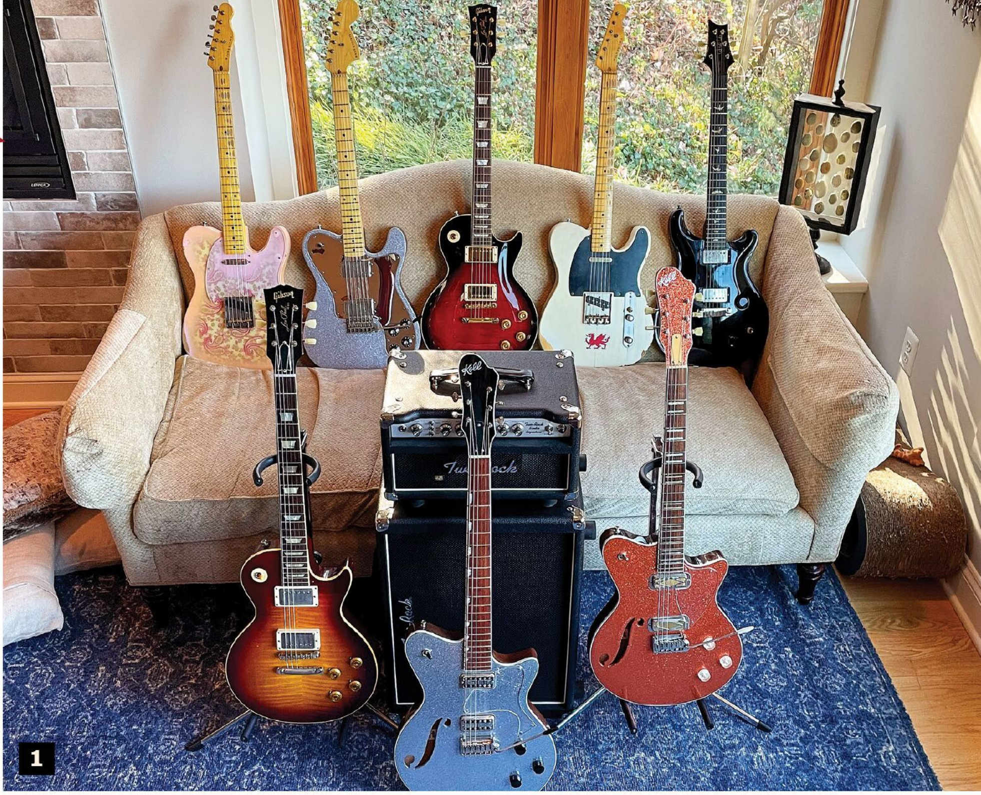

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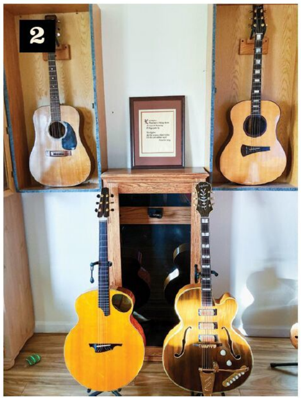

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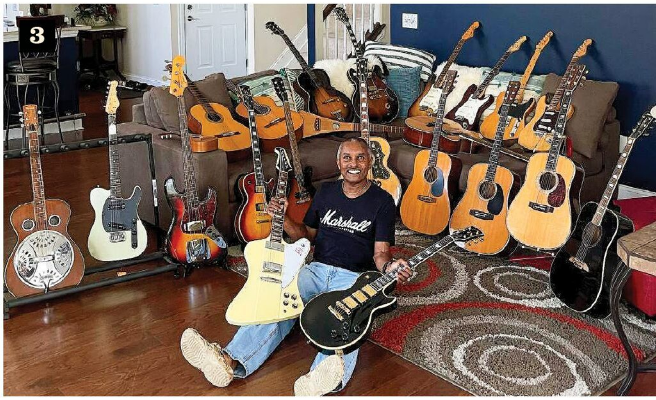

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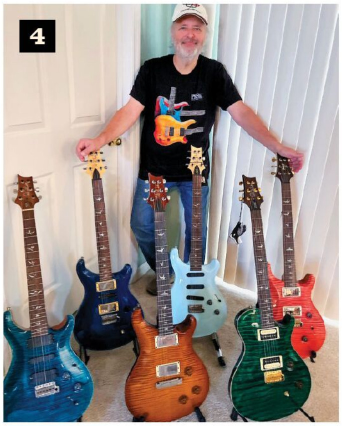

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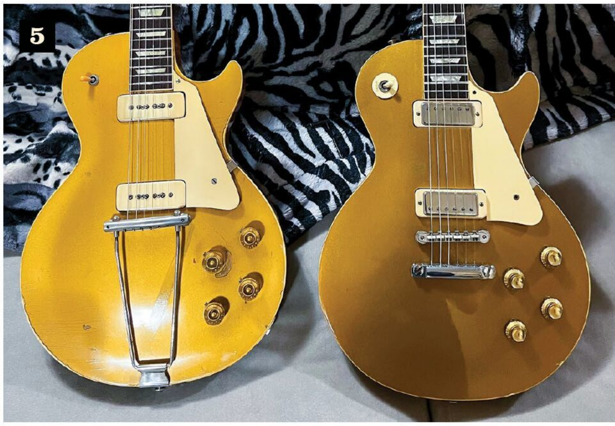

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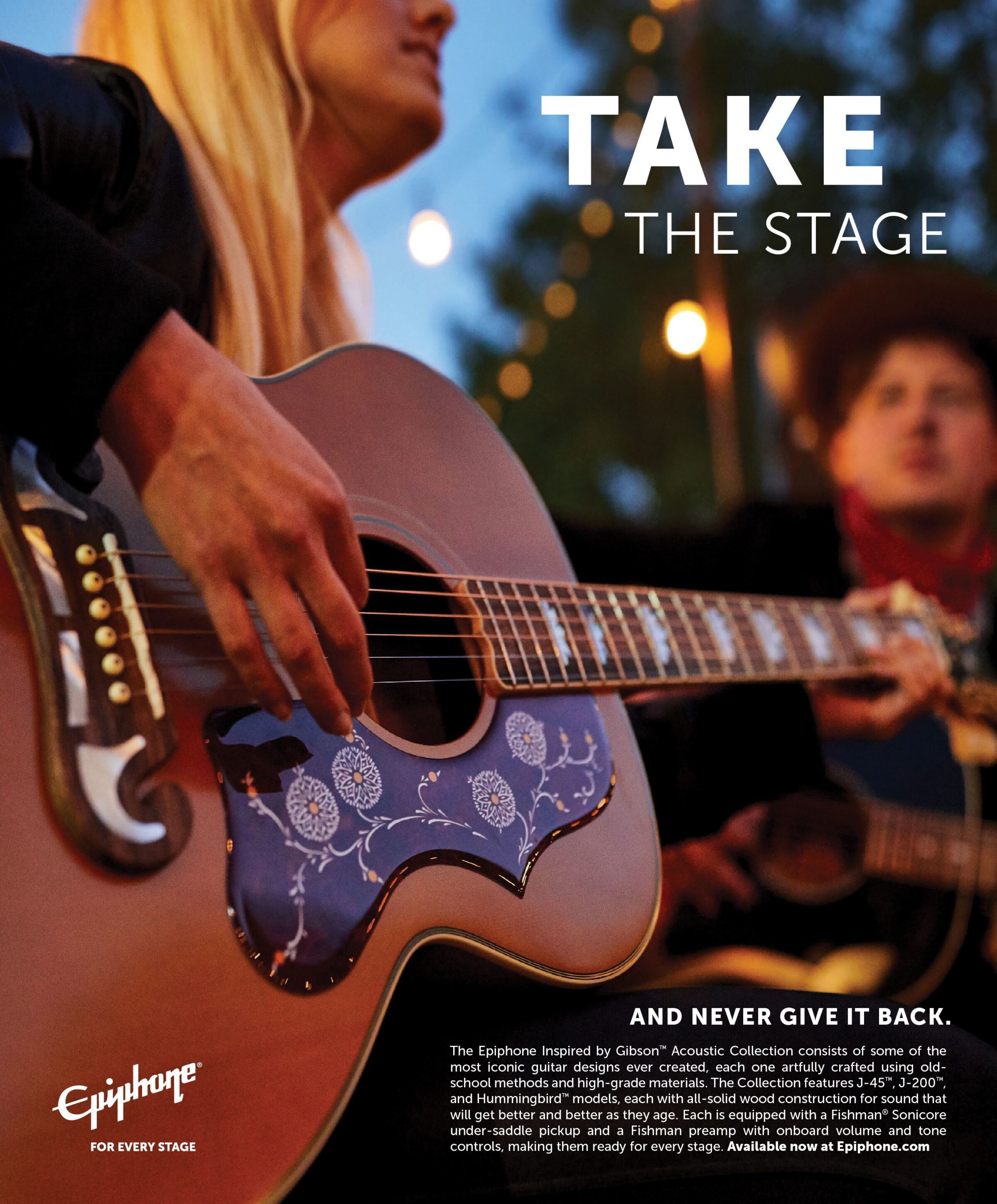

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